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Friday
20 Oct. 2000
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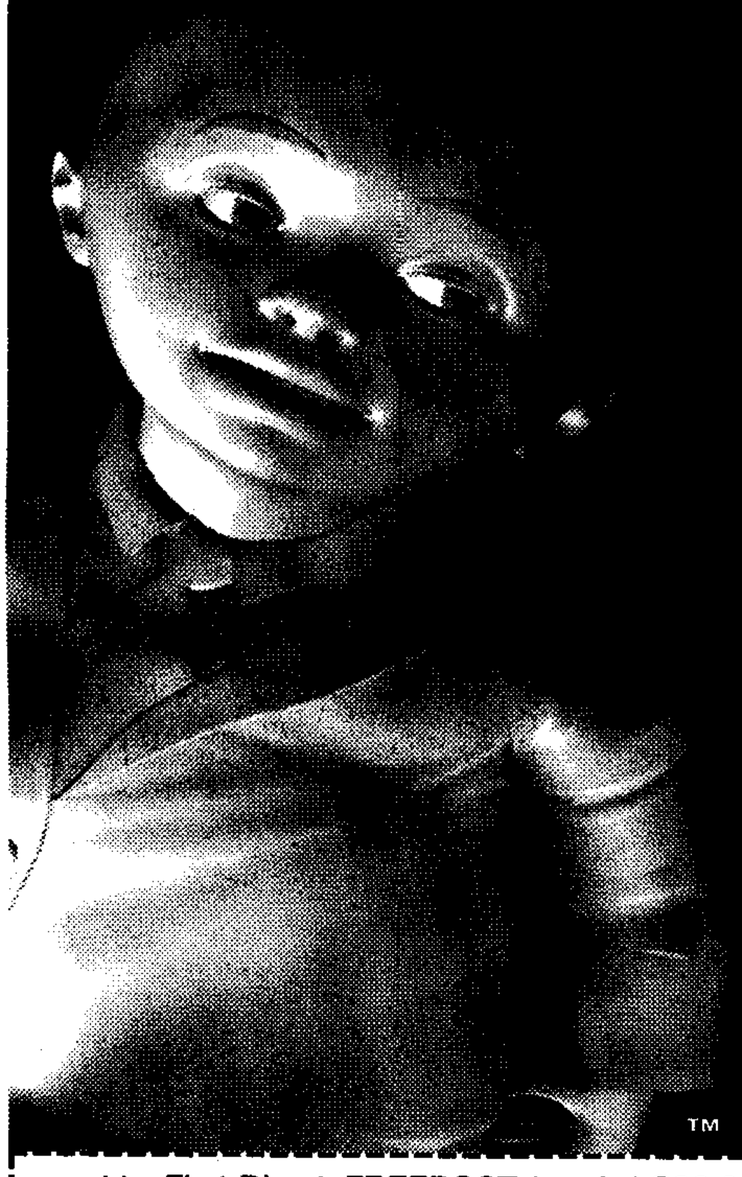

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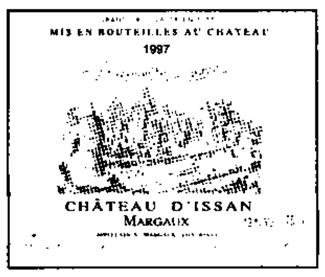


Ch. d'Issan
Margaux - 3e cru classé

❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 210
1996 Ⓜ £ 260
1995 Ⓜ £ 240
1994 £ 220
❤ 1993 Ⓜ £ 220

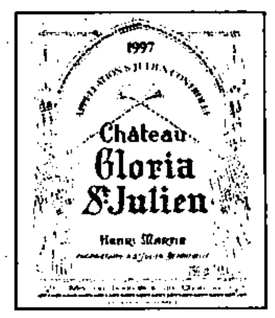
Ch. Giscours
Margaux - 3e cru classé

❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 220
1996 Ⓜ £ 260
1995 Ⓜ £ 240
1990 Ⓜ £ 530
1989 Ⓜ £ 490

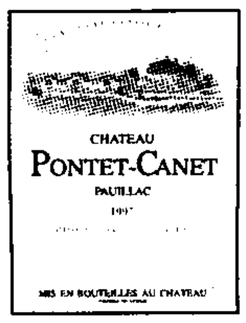
Ch. Talbot
Saint-Julien - 4e cru classé

❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 270
1996 £ 340
❤ 1995 £ 320
1994 Ⓜ £ 300
1993 Ⓜ £ 300
1990 £ 530
1989 £ 560

Ch. Beychevelle
Saint-Julien - 4e cru classé

❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 270
1996 Ⓜ £ 340
1995 Ⓜ £ 320
1994 Ⓜ £ 300
❤ 1993 Ⓜ £ 300
1992 Ⓜ £ 270

Ch. Gloria
Saint-Julien - Cru bourgeois

1997 Ⓜ £ 230
1996 Ⓜ £ 250
❤ 1995 Ⓜ £ 230
1994 £ 210
1993 Ⓜ £ 200



Ch. Pontet-Canet
Pauillac - 5e cru classé

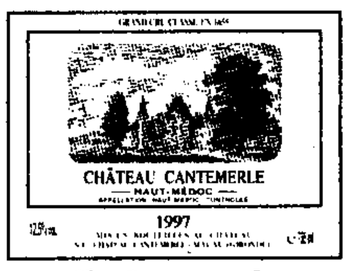
❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 280
1996 Ⓜ £ 390
❤ 1995 Ⓜ £ 390
1994 Ⓜ £ 300
1993 Ⓜ £ 270
1989 £ 510

Ch. Lynch-Bages
Pauillac - 5e cru classé

1997 Ⓜ £ 450
1996 Ⓜ £ 470
1995 Ⓜ £ 440
1994 £ 350
1993 Ⓜ £ 350

Ch. Les Ormes de Pez
Saint-Estèphe - Cru bourgeois

❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 190
1996 £ 230
1995 Ⓜ £ 220
1994 Ⓜ £ 210
❤ 1993 Ⓜ £ 210



Ch. Cantemerle
Haut-Médoc - 5e cru classé

1997 Ⓜ £ 190
1996 Ⓜ £ 230
1995 Ⓜ £ 210

Ch. Peyrabon
Haut-Médoc - Cru bourgeois

❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 130
❤ 1996 £ 160

Ch. Loudenne
Médoc - Cru bourgeois

❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 140
❤ 1996 Ⓜ £ 170

Ch. Chasse-Spleen
Moulis - Cru bourgeois

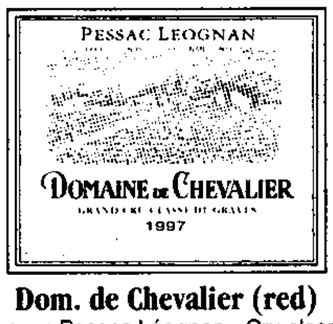
1997 Ⓜ £ 200
1996 £ 250
1994 £ 220
1993 Ⓜ £ 200

Ch. de Sales
Pomerol

❤❤ 1997 Ⓜ £ 180
1996 Ⓜ £ 220
1995 £ 220
❤ 1994 Ⓜ £ 200
❤ 1993 Ⓜ £ 190

Ch. La Gaffelière
Saint-Emilion - 1er grand cru classé B

1997 Ⓜ £ 340
❤ 1996 Ⓜ £ 360
1995 Ⓜ £ 360
1994 Ⓜ £ 280
1993 Ⓜ £ 340



Dom. de Chevalier (red)
Graves Pessac Léognan - Cru classé

1997 Ⓜ £ 330
1996 Ⓜ £ 370
1994 Ⓜ £ 270
1993 Ⓜ £ 260
❤ 1992 Ⓜ £ 240
1990 £ 690
1989 Ⓜ £ 690

Ch. Latour Martillac (white)
Graves Pessac Léognan - Cru classé

1997 £ 200
1996 £ 240
1995 £ 220
1994 £ 210
❤❤ 1993 £ 200
1990 £ 320

Ch. Smith Haut Lafitte (white)
Graves Pessac Léognan

1996 £ 310
❤❤ 1995 £ 290
1994 £ 330

Ch. Suduiraut
Sauternes - 1er cru classé

1997 £ 370
1996 £ 290
❤❤ 1990 £ 390

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The Daily Gnome

OFFERS this week are being accepted for my very important and influential middlebrow national newspaper.

Founded in 1928 by my grandfather Lord Beavergnome, the paper has a long and distinguished history of losing money and readers.

That is why I am looking for bids in excess of £350 billion to take this rag off my hands.

Already I have been approached by a number of influential public figures whose reputations are beyond repair (*shurely "reproach"?*):

- **Mohamed Al Fayed**
- **The Late Robert Maxwell**
- **Mohamed Al Capone**
- **The Kray Brothers**
- **Former President Idi Amin of Uganda**
- **The Blues Brothers**
- **Slobodan Milosevic**

These names bear witness to the astonishing quality of my organ which I am selling in order to spend more time with what little money I have left.

Let it be noted that, as of today, at least four people want to buy my newspaper which is a 100% increase on our last circulation figures.

E. Strobes
Lord Gnome
The Daily Expires
Hollick House
In the Red Friars
London SE LL

- *Rosie, Cherie and the Hindujas 6*
- *Mandy, Tony and the 'smoking gun': HP Sauce 8*
- *Blonde on bland: Anthea Turner's Diary 23*
- *Posh lit: Books on Mr and Mrs Beckham 24*
- *Orchestral manoeuvre: O'Boulez and the LSO 25*
- *News At When? Square Eyes 10* **(formerly p. 9)**

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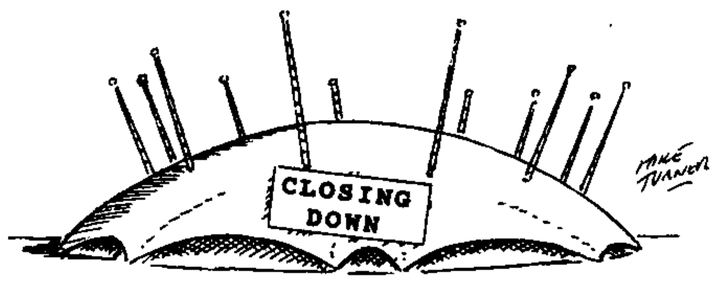


The world's biggest whelk stall

FLOOD VICTIMS in southern England who are mopping up after the most disastrous deluge for 40 years can, as they pause to lean on their mops and brooms, give thanks to their local water company, Southern Water.

Back in July (*Eye* 1007) we reported that Southern Water had refused to reveal the identities of 700 homes in Sussex, Kent and Hampshire at serious risk of flooding... because not all the householders concerned were aware of that risk. To warn them, according to Southern Water, would have been scare-mongering.

How grateful those householders must now be that they were not subjected to such needless anxiety!

THE disaster-prone former chairman of the national lottery commission Dame Helena Shovelton was at least fortunate to enjoy the support of arts minister Alan Howarth.

Even as controversy shrouded her decision to reject a bid to run the lottery from current operator Camelot and the high court accused her of being "conspicuously unfair", Howarth praised the commission for its "very great ability". He did so both in television interviews and in the *Daily Mail* — and after the high court ruling.

Howarth, who jumped ship to Labour before the last election, neglected to mention the £10,000 a year in consultancy fees he had received between 1992 and 1996 from the Virgin empire of Sir Richard Branson – the man behind Camelot's rival, The People's Lottery. Funny that.

DON Cruickshank, chairman of the London Stock Exchange, has been rather busy lately, fending off a Swedish takeover bid. Even so, it is surprising that he still hasn't ordered a formal Stock Exchange inquiry into Tom Bower's allegation that in the late 1980s shareholders of Virgin Group plc were misled about the company's value when Richard Branson was persuading them to sell back their holdings so he could take the business private again.

Who was the managing director of Virgin Group plc at the time? Step forward, er, Don Cruickshank.

An investigation into the Virgin privatisation might cause some embarrassment for Branson at a time when he is posing as the gallant knight on a white horse galloping in to save the national lottery. Further bad publicity for Beardie would thus be most unwelcome for his fellow-directors at the People's Lottery — including a certain Don Cruickshank.

WHAT is Ann Widdecombe on? Hard on her crackdown-on-cannabis triumph, which had exactly the opposite effect to that intended, comes news of a further demonstration of her winning ways.

On a recent visit to a psychiatric day care unit somewhere in southern England, Ann of the thousand gaffes was ushered into a room containing a group of anorexics.

"So," she barked. "What's the food like round here?"

AS predicted, Cherie Booth's human rights law firm Matrix is using the new human rights act to fight valiantly for the rights of barristers to make even more money (Shurely "to test the new legislation in the courts"? Ed.)

Matrix is involved in the first important test of the act before the immigration appeal courts. However, instead of representing a Tamil asylum seeker who claims that sending him back to Sri Lanka would breach his human rights, Matrix's Rhodri Thompson is batting for that scourge of the scroungers, British home secretary Jack Straw.

Chopper search for man in underpants

Luton News

ROBIN COOK has been busily playing peacemaker in the Middle East, urging "calm and restraint" all round. His efforts in this direction are long-standing. Only last year, for instance, the Foreign Office licensed £11.5m-worth of calming and restraining arms to Israel, including "components for combat helicopters" and "tank parts", according to the FO's "strategic export controls" report.

Other pieces of British kit bringing much-needed tranquillity to Israel and Palestine include small arms ammunition, grenade-making kits, parts for heavy gun ammunition, light guns, bombs, armoured fighting vehicles, weapon night sights and other goodies.

At least Britain is even-handed. When Tony Blair also called for "calm" in a phone call to the Syrian government, he no doubt took the opportunity to ask them if they were happy with the £1m of hi-tech military kit Britain sold them last – and whether the small arms ammo, night sights and sniper rifles we flogged them the year before were having the soothing effect required.

GOVERNMENT TO CRACK DOWN ON BEGGARS

Street of Shame

WITH the Barclay twins, Mohamed Fayed and the Hinduja brothers all hoping to buy the Express, there's no doubt which candidate has Downing Street's backing.

Last year, only days after announcing that Chairman Mo was unfit to have a British passport, the government quietly awarded British citizenship to Srichand and Gopichand Hinduja. Shortly afterwards the Blairs were guests of honour at the Hindujas' lavish Diwali party in Alexandra Palace, with Cherie wearing a £1,000 *churidar kameez* (a sort of designer sari) which turned out to be a gift from the brothers.

The Barclays, who have made no discernible effort to suck up to "new" Labour, are clearly unacceptable to No 10 — and to *Express* editor Rosie Boycott, who has already said that she'll resign if they take over her paper. And, although she is still on friendly terms with the Phoney Pharaoh, it seems that she's even fonder of the Hindujas.

When an *Express* hack proposed a hard-hitting exposé of their involvement in the notorious Bofors arms deal, deputy editor Chris Blackhurst sighed wearily. The investigation would be very time-consuming and expensive, he pointed out, and the Hindujas were highly litigious. Oh, and one other thing. "I think you ought to know," Blackhurst revealed, "that Rosie and I went to their Diwali party too."

They repaid the hospitality by running a gushing 1,500-word interview with Srichand, under this fulsome if rather cumbersome headline: "The leader of Britain's richest Asian family tells how the Hinduja vision of greater understanding leading to greater prosperity will benefit us all." The investigative piece, by contrast, disappeared without trace.

● *More on the Hindujas, p. 27*

HAVING shelled out £250,000 for Geoffrey Robinson's memoirs, the Daily Mail was none too pleased to find that the ever-generous former paymaster-general and his friends had merrily given quotes and titbits to the Sunday papers last weekend — thus turning Monday's serialisation into a damp squib.

When a furious *Mail* executive rang him on Sunday lunchtime, Robinson claimed not to have seen the newspapers and affected not to understand why the *Mail* was so annoyed.

He may soon find out: bosses at Associated Newspapers are now considering whether to withhold part of Robinson's fee as punishment for sabotaging their exclusive.

THE Mirror thought it had landed the scoop of the decade during the Tory party conference. A caller to the newsdesk, who claimed to work at the hotel where Ann Widdecombe was staying, said that on delivering room service to her suite at 2.30am he had found a party in full swing, with a drunk and naked William Hague having cocaine snorted off his body by the shadow home secretary.

Begging for exclusive rights to the story, the newdesk told the man to contact their reporter in Bournemouth, Steve White, at once. White duly arranged a meeting on the seafront, describing what he would be wearing.

Alas! The meeting never took place. The caller was in fact a presenter from Liverpool radio station Juice FM — and the panting, excited reactions of the *Mirror* hacks to the "scoop" were broadcast live.

ANDY "Renaissance Man" Malone, the Observer's news editor, continues to impress colleagues with his boundless expertise. Accosting health editor Anthony Browne the other day, Malone murmured confidentially: "This story about testicles, are you seriously saying that sperm comes from yer balls?"

"Er, yes," the startled Browne replied.

"You sure?" Malone persisted — whereupon raucous laughter erupted from hacks sitting nearby. Malone glared at them menacingly: "If this appears in *Private Eye*..."

***DAILY EXPRESS* columnist John Diamond was in scathing form as he berated Tory critics of the introduction of the Human Rights Act.**

"According to the Tories," he wrote, the Act would "see our courts overflowing with gays wanting to marry; paedophiles demanding council flats... [and] drunks suing Oddbins for letting them buy gin ..."

All ridiculous Europhobe nonsense, stormed Diamond. Indeed. One only had to turn to the news section of that same day's *Express* to find that such Euro-barminess is a complete myth. It reported on the case of French alcoholic Philippe Ledrich, who is suing the spirits company Ricard for not warning him that their yellow aperitif, of which he drinks 20 glasses a day, was addictive...

HOLD the front page! On Monday the Daily Express revealed the existence of "a new social group" known as Bobos: "They're stylish, wealthy, but live a simple life. Meet the Bourgeois Bohemians."

Might this by any chance be related to pieces such as "This is the age of the Bohemian Bourgeois... Come and meet the Bobos" (*Evening Standard*, 9 May); "Forget Yuppies — Bobos are the new social category" (*Irish Times*, 18 May); "Are you a Bourgeois Bohemian?" (*Observer*, 28 May); "The Bobos... Bourgeois Bohemians, the rich with a social conscience, are the new elite" (*Sunday Telegraph*, 2 June); "First came the hippie, then there was the yuppie. Now meet their 21st-century offspring: the Bobos, or Bourgeois Bohemians" (*Independent*, 21 July); "First was the hippie then came the yuppie. Now meet their 21st-century offspring: the Bobos, or bourgeois bohemians" (*Sunday Times*, 30 July)?

Manifestly not — since the *Express* piece this week was billed as a "news" story.

Villagers spotted paparazzi prowling around the £3.5million estate the week before the lavish party, eager for snatch shots.

Surrey Advertiser

THE Yugoslav uprising may have consequences for the ancien regime at Associated Newspapers in Kensington.

As television footage of the storming of the Serb parliament was beamed round the *Evening Standard*'s newsrooms, worried executives took to biting the nails as the following subversive email flashed from screen to screen: "The parliament building in Belgrade is under siege! We have a red-winged bullfinch for the cover of ES Magazine. Hurrah!"

THE attempts by Tony O'Reilly's South African newspapers to suck up to the ANC regime are now so shameless that even his own editors are beginning to rebel.

A month ago, after President Thabo Mbeki aired his eccentric and controversial views on Aids in an interview with *Time* magazine, O'Reilly's *Sunday Independent* noted in an editorial that the government was buying advertising space to defend the president's opinions. Alas! Two days later, the paper's editor learned that his bosses had in fact given Mbeki the advert free of charge.

Furious at being made to look like a government stooge, he published a defiant editorial on 11 October: "This newspaper wants to state categorically that it is against its policy to offer the government — or any other body — free space when the content is of a contentious political nature. The *Sunday Independent* apologises to its readers and the editor gives the assurance that the error will not be repeated."

It looks as if Tony O'Reilly will have to find some other way of ingratiating himself with the president in future. Or, of course, find a more compliant editor...

THE recent fuel shortage has at last been put into proper perspective.

As a headline in *OK!* magazine solemnly announces: "Celebrities and Petrol Crisis: Stars Are Inconvenienced."

GAGWATCH

"A joke about the Queen Mother who is visiting an old people's home. Shown into the lounge she approaches one of the old ladies. QM: Don't you know who I am? Old Lady: No, dear, but if you go over and ask the lady at the desk she'll probably be able to tell you."

— Alan Bennett, *Sunday Telegraph*, 19 December 1993.

"Mr Collier [comedian Norman Collier] likes to slip prime minister John Major into one joke. 'Did you see where Mr Major visited an old people's home the other day?... Mr Major bent down and in a loud voice, he says, "Hello, do you know who I am?" And the old gent looks up and says: "You could ask the matron. She'll know."'

— *New York Times* report on British seaside comedians, 28 August 1994.

"Lord Levene, the lord mayor of London... was out visiting in his parish recently and stopped off at an old people's home where, my spy tells me, one sprightly and fit old dear took and interest in one of his chains of office. 'Do you know who I am?' Levene condescended to ask, beaming a smile into her face. 'No, dear, but ask a sister and she'll tell you,' the old lady flashed back quickly."

— *Sunday Times* City diary, 14 March 1999.

"Jack Straw, Home Secretary, claimed he had visited an old people's home after this week's *Daily Telegraph* poll found only 24 percent of the population knew who he was. 'Do you know who I am?' he asked a resident. 'No, dear,' she replied. 'But if you ask matron, she will tell you.'"

— Labour party conference report, *Daily Telegraph*, 1 October 1999.

"But she is the source of some good stories. My favourite relates her visit to an old people's home. 'Do you know who I am?' she asked one of them playfully. 'If you don't know who you are,' came the reply, 'go to the desk at the end of the corridor and they'll help you.'"

— W. F. Deedes tribute to the Queen Mother, 4 August 2000.

"Just back from enjoying Britain's golden performance in the Olympics, Princess Anne has been recalling an amusing exchange she had during a visit to an old people's home in Sydney. 'I saw this woman in a wheelchair and went over to have a chat with her. At the end of the conversation, I asked her: "Do you know who I am?" The woman said to me, "No, but if you go to the front desk and ask them, they should be able to tell you."' Who says our Royals have no sense of humour?"

— Another scoop from Nigel Dempster's Diary, *Daily Mail*, 11 October 2000.

LIFE IMITATES ART

THE EYE's uncanny powers of prognostication have been demonstrated yet again.

No sooner than Eye 1012 printed its "Action Chapman" cartoon (Nazi action man with two heads impaling a third on a stick), we received Countereditions' catalogue of Britart, containing Jake and Dinos Chapman's charming and almost identical self-assembly build-your-own-hell kit.

UK NOT VERY CONFIDENTIAL ANYMORE

***SUN* gossip columnist Marina Hyde was sacked and escorted from the building by security guards last month after her editor David Yelland discovered a huge cache of blushworthy emails between the lovely hackette and Mirror editor Piers Morgan. It transpired that Marina and Piers had been sending each other electronic messages up to 10 times a day.**

Yet rival rags have been curiously reluctant to mention this fascinating tale. Can it be because Moron isn't a public figure? Impossible: no editor has courted celebrity more shamelessly since the heyday of Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill. Nor can they be worried about invading personal privacy, since that is exactly the raison d'etre of Hyde's column and Moron's entire journalistic career.

Were there doubts about the story's authenticity, then? No: it was common knowledge at both Wapping and Canary Wharf that Moron and Hyde were close friends and that he planned to give her a well-rewarded column in the *Mirror*. A likelier explanation is that newspaper executives felt "there but for the grace of God go we all..."

It wasn't until Moron's old mentor Kelvin Mackenzie publicly blew the whistle that the affair saw the light of day — though only in the relative obscurity of the *Telegraph*'s media gossip column. Standing in for Moron at the farewell party for veteran Mirror Group director Roger Eastoe, El Kel announced that Piers couldn't be present because he needed to "spend more time" with Marina. Mackenzie also revealed that Moron had now taken up temporary lodging at the home of *Mirror* lawyer Martin Cruddace.

This is the same Cruddace who co-owns a racehorse with Moron; the same Cruddace whose parents had curiously and coincidentally bought shares in some of the same obscure stock as Moron at the time the City Slickers were so dubiously hyping them; and the same Cruddace who was an important figure in Trinity Mirror's inept inquiry into the Slickers scandal.

Though Moron believes he is invincible, not least because he has Downing Street's support, he could yet be hoist by his own stupidity and arrogance. Just as the Marina story began to filter back to the *Mirror* board, he was presented with a disastrous set of circulation figures. To cover his own rear he laid the blame on the newsdesk and sacked or sidelined several key executives — including some who know a lot about the Slickers' operation. Will they now feel free to provide vital evidence to the DTI investigation into how much the editor knew about the share-hyping?

Piers hopes that Tony Blair and Alastair Campbell won't allow him to be dragged down with an election so close — which might explain why his paper has been so sycophantic towards Blair in recent weeks, even as the government's troubles multiplied and *Mirror* readers felt let down by "new" Labour. But would even No 10 dare to interfere with a DTI inquiry merely to save the wretched Moron's skin? Surely not.

I'm off the booze says Jamie Lee

BOTTLE BATTLE: Hollywood star Jamie Lee Curtis says shge has bveaten her drink problem

The Gazette, Blackpool

JUST FANCY THAT

Former *Coronation Street* barmaid Sarah Lancashire, for whom BBC sport supremo Peter Salmon left his wife and children, had appeared in two dramas for the Beeb while Salmon was controller of BBC1, reported the *Daily Telegraph*.

Their sexy romps, the paper speculated, had probably commenced after he commissioned her to star in a third. The names of the three shows? *Clocking Off* (nudge, nudge), *Chambers* (geddit?) and *Gentlemen's Relish* (phwoarrr!).

HACKWATCH

Simon Jenkins

SIMON JENKINS, who earns £250,000 a year for his columns in the *Times* and the London *Evening Standard*, is no ordinary hack. He has served on the boards of British Rail, London Regional Transport, Save Britain's Heritage, the Institute of Contemporary Arts, the Old Vic, the Commission for Local Democracy, the South Bank, the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, the Millennium Commission and many others.

He is chairman of this year's Booker Prize judges and sits on a committee organising the Queen's golden jubilee. But do all these worthy bodies get any sage advice from Jenkins which couldn't be offered by a housetrained budgerigar?

On 11 March 1998, Jenkins mocked Robin Cook's huffing and puffing over Kosovo. "The only way to stop Serbia doing as it chooses in Kosovo is to invade it. All else is hot air." But it wouldn't happen, of course: "I find it hard to believe that the British cabinet seriously intends to garrison Kosovo against a Serbian army."

Three months later, on 10 June, he taunted Robin Cook again. "The British government, and its overseas allies, will have to accept Serbian authority in Kosovo."

By the autumn, after several ethnic-cleansing atrocities, Tony Blair was threatening air-strikes to force Serbian troops and paramilitaries out of Kosovo. Jenkins remained incredulous. "Suppose Milosevic does climb down? The scenario is improbable," he wrote on 9 October 1998. "Suppose Milosevic does not climb down? Nato could resume bombing. But as we know from Iraq, this strengthens rather than weakens a regime... Nato would have to guarantee Kosovan security indefinitely against a hostile neighbour. This is near unthinkable."

The following spring, despite Jenkins's warnings, Tony Blair went ahead. "The objective set out by Mr Blair yesterday appears to be to bomb the Serbs into granting partial autonomy to Kosovo," Jenkins wrote on 24 March 1999. "It is scarcely credible that a serious person can believe this will be done by bombs... The issue in all territorial disputes is the military balance on the ground. In Kosovo that balance is now overwhelmingly Serbian. Nato spin is that bombing 'will help Mr Milosevic to retreat' and that 'he cannot possibly win'. I am sure the Wehrmacht thought the same in Yugoslavia in 1940, to its cost."

And so on, throughout the war. "The Great Bombing Pretence is collapsing in Kosovo, as it was bound to collapse... The misreading of Mr Milosevic by Nato deserves to rank with Gallipoli and Pearl Harbour in the annals of military incompetence" (9 April 1999). "They [Nato] could keep bombing but I don't think anyone believes it would achieve what they originally set out to do. It would not drive the Serb army out of Kosovo" (18 April 1999). "The only strategy ever likely to dislodge Serb forces from Kosovo, a ground attack, is now barely conceivable... When in March Mr Blair promised Parliament that there would be no ground war, he sent a simple signal to Milosevic: 'Hold on, you will win'" (12 May 1999). "The air war is lost... Everything in Mr Blair's demeanour suggests an invasion is for him as unavoidable as retreat is unthinkable to the Serbs... The Serbs will fight" (26 May 1999).

Whoops! "Mr Milosevic has bowed before the prospect of invasion," Jenkins noted on 4 June 1999. Time for a small admission that Fleet Street's grandest columnist had been quite wrong? Er, no. "Yesterday's events should not be regarded as a triumph for the 'bombing alone' lobby. Quite the opposite... By tossing an 'acceptance' at Nato's feet, [Milosevic] has bought himself time and moved on to the next stage in his great survival game."

Ah yes, survival. Milosevic was "politically impregnable", according to Jenkins. As he wrote on 15 October 1999, after a visit to Yugoslavia: "The West's every action – from economic sanctions to war crimes indictment – entrenches Mr Milosevic in power." Or, as he told the *Observer* a few months earlier, "We've Lebanon-ised the Balkans in a deeply unstable way, and, I'm absolutely sure, entrenched Milosevic in power forever."

Whoops again!

Still, everyone makes occasional mistakes. Especially Jenkins, who is the progenitor of the Dome. Immediately after the 1997 election, as a millennium commissioner, he wrote a three-page letter to Tony Blair urging the new PM to go ahead with the project: think of what the Blair children would miss if their dad cancelled it, he pleaded.

By then, we now know, Jenkins and his fellow-commissioners had already received a report from Deloitte Consulting warning that all the dome's projections – for budgets, sponsorship money, visitor numbers – were insanely optimistic. But Jenkins's readers were not let in on the secret. "The dome budget, as tightly audited as any in history, is on-target... I know of no foreign visitor to the Greenwich mammoth who has not come back gasping with envy: 'You British have done THAT!'... The fact is, a rare British sensation is unfolding just now in east London. Only whingers wobble" (29 May 1998).

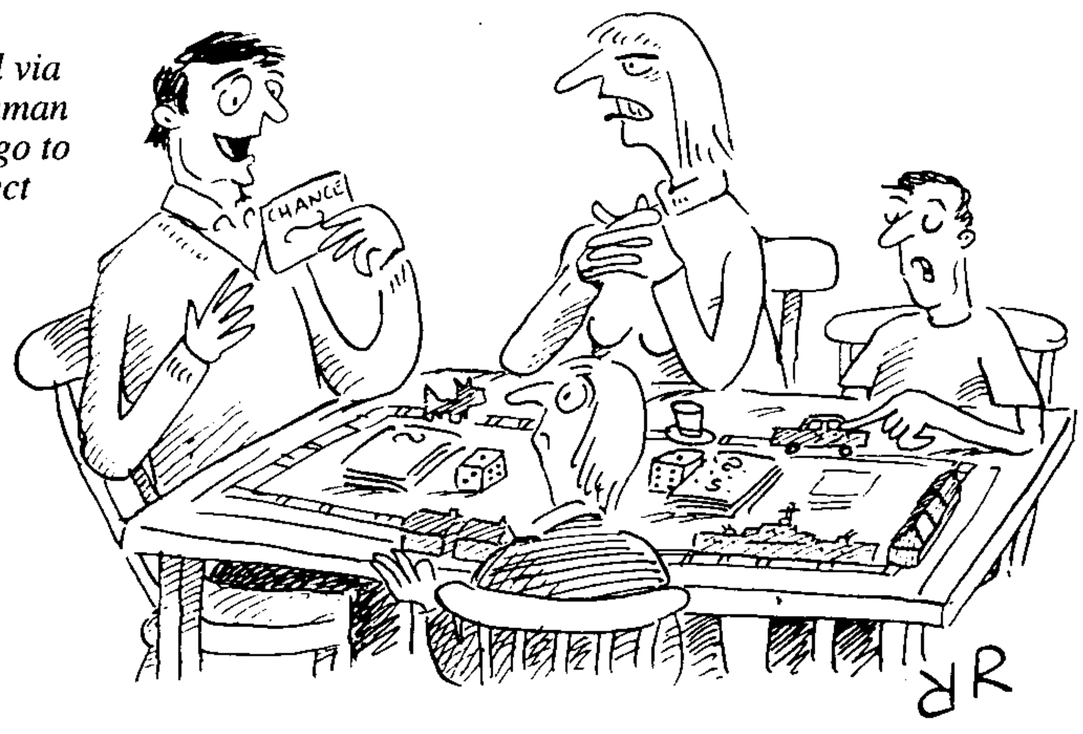
"The original budget, as audited by the company in July, has not been exceeded and remains as it was at the start in 1997, £758 million... Cost control within the Dome is fanatical" (9 September 1999). "A triumph" (6 January 2000). "There is no reason why the dome should not meet its target attendance of 13 million in the coming year. It will work. Is that all? No, it is not. I believe that the dome must meet an additional challenge, of which popularity is only part. By the end of the year it must in some sense have defined its moment in time. Visitors must recall not just a jolly day out, but an event that banged a notice in the ground: 'This was Britain 2000: remember it'" (13 January).

Since then, Jenkins has been curiously reluctant to remember it. But there was a passing reference on 27 September, when he wrote a *Times* column defending the government's record: "The 'mistakes' laid at the cabinet's door are footling in the light of history. Beef-on-the-bone, the 75p pension, the dome, Tube privatisation, the petrol famine, are hardly hanging offences." Just as well: otherwise Jenkins would be first in line for the gallows.

Asked by the *Daily Mail* last month about his Dome record, a "spokesman" (*sic*) for Jenkins replied: "He can't do any interviews." But last Thursday he issued a brief statement. "I have been silent because the people involved are friends of mine... I will, however, return to my journalistic mode and give my views in the New Year when it is all over."

Now that he's admitted that all his pieces about the dome were not "in journalistic mode", perhaps the newspapers which pay so handsomely for his journalism will ask for a refund.

"Go to jail. Go indirectly to jail via the Court of Human Rights. Do not go to jail at all. Collect £200 million."



THE sighs of relief from Number Ten concerning Geoffrey Robinson's book and what it has not revealed could be heard all down Whitehall.

For the past 12 months there has been feverish to-ing and fro-ing between Downing Street and the former paymaster-general, not to mention secret missions by Tony Blair's confidante Anji Hunter. And who could fail to miss the conspiratorial huddle between Blair's chum Lord Falconer and Robinson at Gordon Brown's recent post-wedding bash in south London?

Ever since the aggrieved Robinson announced his intention of writing his memoirs, *The Unconventional Minister*, Downing Street has been desperate to learn its likely contents. It has been at pains to prevent collateral damage attaching itself first to Robinson's sworn enemy Peter Mandelson, and possibly to Peter's friend Tony over that infamous £373,000 Notting Hill home loan.

However, thanks to Robinson's far from startling book, issue now seems to have been reduced to two not terribly interesting questions: Did Pauper Peter Ask For The Money? Or: Did Generous Geoffrey Offer It First? And of course it all depends whom you believe. The most interesting question — the one that has had Number Ten in such a lather — has not been addressed by the book: the existence, or not, of a crucial piece of evidence Robinson supporters claim is the "smoking gun".

This "smoking gun" is a hand-written letter Robinson's supporters claim Mandelson composed on stationery from the office of Her Majesty's leader of the opposition, whose occupant at the time was one Tony Blair. They claim that the letter was retained and is today kept under lock and key. But so far the smoking gun — if it exists at all — has conspicuously failed to go off and the unpleasantness seems set to continue.

It might all have been so different, if only Peter had shown rudimentary good manners and invited Geoffrey to the house warming...

DONALD DEWAR might have allowed himself a hollow laugh at the sickening chorus of sentimental claptrap that followed his death from the media and "colleagues".

Barely days before both had been united in the common practice of "doing in Donald", a sport that continued even as Dewar's health began to fail him earlier in the year.

But how delighted he would have been to learn that long time baiters such as Scottish secretary John Reid held him in such high regard, and that the *Scotsman* could devote so much coverage to his sad demise.

THE YOUNG CONSERVATIVES

ONE of the first problems facing new SNP leader John Swinney is a row concerning the party's charming local government spokesman Kenny Gibson (see *Eyes passim*).

Gibson, the golden boy of the SNP national executive, is less popular with rank and file members who wonder why allegations in the press of violence towards women by Gibson were brushed under the carpet.

At the beginning of September three Glasgow constituency associations wrote to Swinney and Alex Neil, at the time the two candidates for SNP national convenor, as well as to the national executive and all constituency branches asking for an investigation into the allegations.

Gibson claims the allegations are an attempt at character assassination and threatened the five signatories of the letter with legal action. Meanwhile his faithful supporters on the national executive are considering whether or not to take disciplinary action against the five party members who, having dared request a full and open inquiry, now look set to become victims of a witch-hunt.

CLUELESS John Home Robertson, Scottish executive fisheries minister, is backing the salmon conservation (Scotland) bill introduced to parliament on 28 September.

But how will the bill help conserve Scottish salmon stocks, currently in "free-fall-mode"? Easy: give Scottish district salmon boards greater powers to regulate fishing.

Why are salmon stocks in free-fall? Because greedy river owners allowed it to happen by milking both ends; salmon in estuaries and rod and line sport angling upstream, and by leasing land-based sites in the West Highlands to fish farmers to service offshore factory fish farms. Who runs salmon boards? Yes, you guessed it... the greedy river owners. Nice one, John.

WHAT to do about Shaun Woodward, Tory defector and friend of Peter Mandelson, who is becoming increasingly desperate to find a safe Labour berth in time for the general election?

The anxious to please Woodward has been wowing sceptical Labour audiences with moving tales of his "working class roots" in a round Britain tour, as well as writing newspaper articles and spending time at dreary Labour training events. The problem is that most Labour seats have already found new hopefuls and those that remain are being fought over with more than usual ferocity.

The answer, it seems, lies with the Labour whips, who are even now approaching MPs of a certain age in the tearooms and promising them exciting new careers in the Lords. Once agreed, the said MP then announces his "sad and difficult decision to step down" just before the general election is called, thus allowing Labour's NEC to handpick the candidate — ie Shaun — rather than leaving it to the locals who might prefer a hairy-arsed trade unionist.

IT'S one thing to be a Conservative cheerleader in print, but *Torygraph* commentator Janet Daley appears to be taking things embarrassingly far in real life.

Fellow hacks at the Tory conference squirmed as La Daley loudly applauded at every pause in Willam Hague's speech. One said: "It looked like a Bateman cartoon – the hackette who cheered Willam Hague."

HOW good it is to see that our former beloved leaderene is still playing a constructive role in world affairs.

Margaret Thatcher is to speak on "Challenges Facing the 21st Century" at the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries annual convention in San Antonio, Texas next year, reports the *American Metal Markets* newspaper. And who better to show the scrap industry the way forward than the former Iron Lady?

'Backbiter'

WATER WORLD

SHAREHOLDERS of Kelda concerned of late by the revolving door in the boardroom and the failure of the scam by directors to set up a "mutual" (see *Eyes passim*) can rest assured it is business as usual at the former Yorkshire Water.

True, Kelda's top three directors – chairman Brandon Gough, chief executive Kevin Bond and water services MD Jon Cox – have left this year; and plans to transfer the firm's water and sewerage assets (and debts) were dropped after they were strongly opposed by the water regulator Ofwat.

But the company was back on form when shareholders gathered in Harrogate for last month's agm. Just down the road at Huddersfield magistrates' court Kelda was pleading guilty to allowing more than two million gallons of raw sewage to flow into the River Colne. It was fined £3,500 and ordered to pay costs of £2,178.

"Any of you girls good at darning socks?"

BLAIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

THE recently announced shortlist of bidders for John Prescott's air traffic control sell-off does nothing to inspire public confidence in this safety-critical scheme.

Front runner Serco has decided to beef up its bid by hiring Bob Ayling as an adviser. Ayling's friendship with "new" Labour may be handy, but his management record is grim. He demonstrated his skills in the aero sector by being sacked from British Airways, and he went on to demonstrate his management skills at the New Millennium Experience Company. No doubt his presence ensures that air traffic privatisation will be a huge success — just like the dome.

Serco is also hiring lobbying firm Lexington Communications. It was set up by one Mike Craven, who worked for Prescott in the 1980s and, in 1997, helped draw up the transport white paper free of charge for his old boss — the same white paper which included the air traffic control sell-off.

When it comes to influence, though, few firms try harder than Raytheon, the American arms firm and the next favourite bidder. Raytheon has already demonstrated its ability to identify friends by donating "£5,000 or more" to the Labour party. It also retains lobbyist GJW, which has a host of ex-Labour staff among its executives, including Stephanie Ayres. She looks after Raytheon lobbying having previously worked for Andrew Faulks MP, Peter Mandelson — and having been a founder member of the Labour's wonks' group, Labour Staff Forum.

Lockheed is also a strong bidder, but its safety record should be enough to scare most air travellers (see *Eyes passim*).

To help beef up its bid, Lockheed has brought in UK talent including Sir Anthony Cleaver, a Blair favourite. Cleaver used to run the Dounreay nuclear plant when he was head of the Atomic Energy Authority. In the same week Lockheed made its offer, the AEA announced it would take 60 years to clean up the mess at the nuclear plant, and that some areas would remain off limits for up to 300 years.

Lockheed, like Raytheon, also hired GJW to help it lobby, and for good measure it has taken on Politics International too. Politics International has a host of Labour wonks on its board. These include Josh Foster, a former researcher for Denis Healey; Bruce George MP; David Clark and Martin O'Neill, Alison Cairns and Rod Cartwright, from Labour's Millbank operation; former Labour shadow cabinet adviser Jim Nicholls; former adviser to Michael Meacher Ken Penton; and Jeanette Gould, former researcher in Tony Blair's office when he was leader of the opposition.

If Serco, Raytheon or Lockheed fail, air traffic control will be handed to "The Airline Group", comprising eight British airlines. Not only is there an obvious conflict of interest in having airlines manage air traffic control, but it will put Richard Branson's Virgin in the driving seat. The Airline Group has hired Citigate Westminster as its lobbyist. Citigate regularly donates the usual "£5,000 or more" to Labour. In turn, Blair made its chairman Richard Faulkner a peer.

Number crunchings

25%

Proportion of the general population who have tried cannabis at least once

35%

Proportion of the shadow cabinet who have tried cannabis at least once

?%

Proportion of the cabinet who have tried cannabis at least once

COURT CIRCULAR

PRINCE CHARLES is about to lose another starring royal role because of his mother's reluctance to loosen the reins. Despite repeated attempts by Charles's advisers, some senior Palace staff and Downing St to persuade Brenda to let the ageing heir to the throne take on more of her ceremonial duties, she refuses to play ball. The best that Charles gets is doing the odd investiture when she's away. Now an attempt to give him star billing on Remembrance Sunday for the second year running is about to bite the dust.

Charles took centre stage at the Cenotaph last year when the Queen was in South Africa for the Commonwealth heads of government meeting and his staff reckoned he made a reasonable job of it – although they were miffed that Princess Beatrice stole the headlines by doing her fainting routine on the balcony. They reckoned that if they could get him centre stage for a second year running the job would be his for keeps and Brenda could retire from wreath-laying duties.

For a time everything seemed to be playing into the hands of Charles's men at St James's Palace. Outline royal diaries showed that Brenda and Phil were due to be on a state visit to Italy over the Remembrance weekend which left Charles's path to the Cenotaph clear. As a bonus the Italian visit would also prevent the Queen from inaugurating the Church of England's newly-elected General Synod at Westminster Abbey, thus giving Charles a chance to try out being Defender of the Faith. But alas the Italians asked for a change and the visit was moved forward to this week. [ie Eye publication week] Buckingham Palace was relieved as the Queen was unhappy about missing two major events at home and Prince Philip had let it be known what he thought about having to honour Italy's war heroes. (His staff are very tired of that joke about Italian tanks and reverse gears.)

Although Charles's office haven't given up all hope of keeping Brenda away from the Cenotaph, it looks as though once again he will be consigned to the second row, staring at the back of Mummy's hat.

Number crunching

45

YEARS

how long the Dounreay nuclear plant will have been in operation by the time it is shut down in 2004

60

YEARS

how long it will take to clean up and decontaminate the site

NOOKS and CORNERS

DEMOLITION may be the worst an old and beautiful building can suffer, but there are other fates almost as sad and reprehensible. A change of use — as with a church — can lead, if not to complete mutilation then to an alteration in character which both undermines the integrity of the design and represents a betrayal of trust and intention.

A case in point is the Lucas Hospital at Wokingham, which the Drapers Company wishes to close and sell. This group of almshouses is listed grade I so the threat is not demolition. If they are sold, no doubt they will be converted and tarted up into luxurious and desirable maisonettes: very nice for the purchasers; very nice — and a great relief —for the Drapers' Company; but not so nice for the sort of people who, for more than three centuries, have found these buildings to be "the port of rest from troublous toyle" at the end of their lives.

The Lucas Hospital was established under the will of Henry Lucas, who died in 1663. They may or may not have been designed by Sir Christopher Wren. No matter: they are a fine example of the gentlemanly architecture of that time. Built of brick with a generous hipped and tiled roof and a big pediment, they comprised a chapel and ten units of accommodation for "poor persons, being married couples or single men, of good character resident in certain named parishes". They still do.

But now the Drapers' Company — administrators of the Charity of Henry Lucas since the death of his executors — has applied to the charity commissioners to amend the trusts of the charity to allow them to flog this asset. If this is allowed, and the existing residents are turfed out and the buildings sold, the Drapers might graciously "provide new purpose built accommodation" somewhere else, possibly in a joint venture with another housing charity. Why? One reason is that, after 300 years, the Lucas Hospital is now found to be inconveniently sited, even though it now has better access to the town than ever before and is within half a mile of a supermarket.

Another claim by the Hanover Housing Association – which was invited to make an "objective" and "impartial" report even though it manages all the Drapers' Company's almshouses — is that the accommodation in the Hospital is no longer "of a suitable type". Yet new bathrooms, kitchens and heating have been provided in recent years and, more to the point, these almshouses are popular.

There is a waiting list for the Lucas Hospital. This is scarcely surprising: as with the Chelsea Hospital, to live in a community in a fine and venerable building is infinitely preferable to being shunted off to some ghastly modern old people's home which is the fate that awaits most of us if the government does not introduce compulsory euthanasia first. Almshouses like these are dignified and civilised; they work. And they are beautiful.

But the real reason for this cynical betrayal of trust is of course money: the Drapers claim that "the almshouses are no longer economically viable". They cost £50,000 a year to run (two-fifths of which is "administration") but the endowment fund is now only some £18,000, so the ten units run at a loss. Yet, in 1665, there was £4,810 of Lucas's bequest to invest after building (and, as Country Life once remarked, "seen today upon Luckley Green in Wokingham parish the Lucas Hospital stands for two thousand and odd pounds well laid out") while in 1905 the endowment fund stood at just under £10,000. As two noughts need to be added to such figures to indicate present day values, that means a million. So where has all the money gone?

The Lucas Hospital now needs essential maintenance and repairs carried out, yet under the Lucas's Hospital charity scheme confirmation act of 1923 the Drapers undertook to keep the buildings in good repair. Besides, a grade I listed building might be eligible for grant aid. SAVE Britain's Heritage has advised that the Henry Lucas Charity can be perpetuated within the buildings designed for its purpose by agreements with building conservation charities, like the Landmark Trust or the National Trust, but the Drapers have declined to investigate this possibility. Rumour has it that the Drapers Company already has a buyer in mind for this tiresome old building. I wonder who that is?

'Piloti'

LEGAL NEWS

THE madness of solicitors is being clearly demonstrated over at the Law Society, which is having to dig ever deeper into its pockets to defend itself at an industrial tribunal next month when it faces claims of racism and sexism by former vice-president and "bully" Kamlesh Bahl.

Until Ms Bahl resigned following an inquiry which found in favour of five Law Society staff who had accused her of bullying, the tariff was already running at £462,000. Preparing for the tribunal is said to have pushed it towards £750,000 and rising.

Interestingly the three named defendants in the action — Robert Sayer, Jane Betts and Jean Johnson — no longer work for the Law Society. Johnson, head of personnel, took early retirement with a £350,000 pay and pension package. Betts, secretary general, left after she was effectively asked to apply for her own job when the Society decided to create a new post of chief executive (the Society denies that she left with a six-figure pay-off). And Robert Sayer, the none-too-popular president (counter-accused by Bahl of being a bully) was recently voted out by members.

MULTI-ETHNIC NEWS

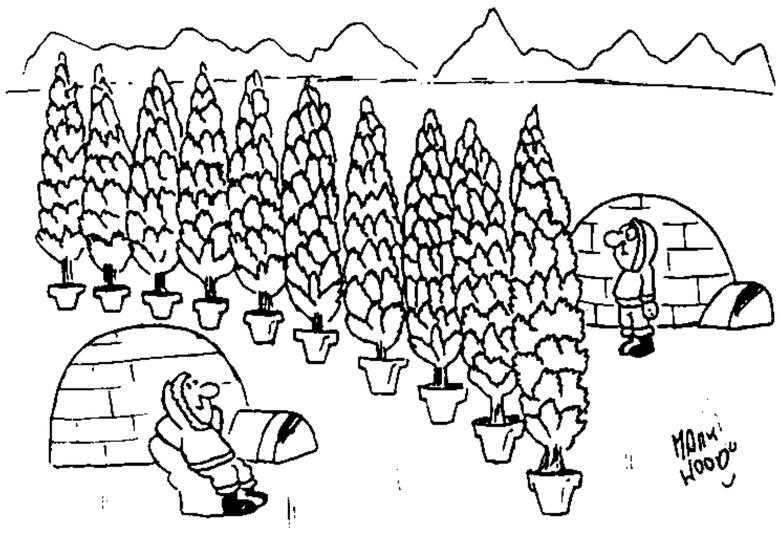
THE report of the commission on the future of multi-ethnic Britain recommends that 15 per cent of the reformed House of Lords should consist of black, Asian and Chinese people in the interest of greater representation of minorities.

Such a figure would be on the generous side of representative, given that the latest figures from the Office of National Statistics indicate that just 6.4 per cent of the population of Britain comes from such backgrounds. But not as generous as the composition of the commission itself, on which seven out of 24 members – or 29 per cent – were of "black, Asian or Chinese" stock.

PROMINENT among the members of the commission on the future of multi-ethnic Britain, whose report last week included the penetrating observation, arrived at after three years' work, that the term "British" had "racist connotations", was Sir Herman Ouseley, former chairman of the commission for racial equality.

While in the CRE job Sir Herman became something of an authority on the mysterious phenomenon of "institutional racism" and was frequently to be found pontificating about it in the media.

He certainly has more experience of the subject than most. As *Eye* 971 reported, in the years 1990-93 seven allegations of racial discrimination were upheld against Lambeth council at tribunals. The chief executive of Lambeth council in those years was, needless to say, one Herman Ouseley.



EYE TV

The New BBC1 Schedule

WHILE the tabloids excitedly report the news that outgoing BBC1 controller Peter Salmon has been a private audience for raunchy performances by the former Raquel from *Coronation Street*, the big question of the week is whether BBC1 is about to do to its audience what Salmon has been doing to Raquel.

Furious at being shunted to Sunday from Monday, *Panorama* has been showing a rat-like cunning which looked suspiciously like an attempt to embarrass director general Greg Dyke. Its final weekday edition featured the huge and controversial scoop of the naming of the Omagh bomb suspects. While it would be terrible to think that the programme took the legally risky step of identifying the bombers in order to ensure that the last show before the shove gained exceptional attention, this was a useful side-effect of its journalism.

And the first edition in the Sunday slot also looked carefully chosen. After the Omagh programme almost any film would have looked dumbed-down in comparison, but a film about the employment practices of Nike and Gap seemed almost to invite critics to claim that the agenda had softened with the rescheduling.

The film even seemed to be shot more like an ITV *World In Action* and, indeed, the sweat-shop truth behind the swanky labels was a regular subject of that ITV current affairs show. The new controller of BBC1 would be wise to commission a couple of low-rating heavyweight *Panoramas* for Sunday nights because, like footballers who deliberately play badly to make people think the manager's rubbish, there's a risk the *Panorama* team may secretly want to seem inferior on Sundays.

As for the much-discussed new BBC *News At Ten*, well news ratings soar in war-time and Israel and Palestine may yet give the BBC a chance to publish healthy figures for the first weeks of the new bulletin.

The real test, though, won't come until next year when, three or four times a week, ITV's restored *News At Ten* clashes with the BBC's: the first ever headline head-to-head in British television, which has deliberately avoided them. This is culture secretary Chris Smith's nightmare.

But should it be? The equation between news timings and viewers must be more subtle than has been allowed by Smith and the crusty newspaper pundits. In America rival news programmes are usually broadcast at the same time on the cynical basis that viewers — if given even one alternative to a news programme — will tend to take it. By broadcasting simultaneously the networks ensure that Americans either find out what the president was doing today or go off and smoke some crack cocaine instead.

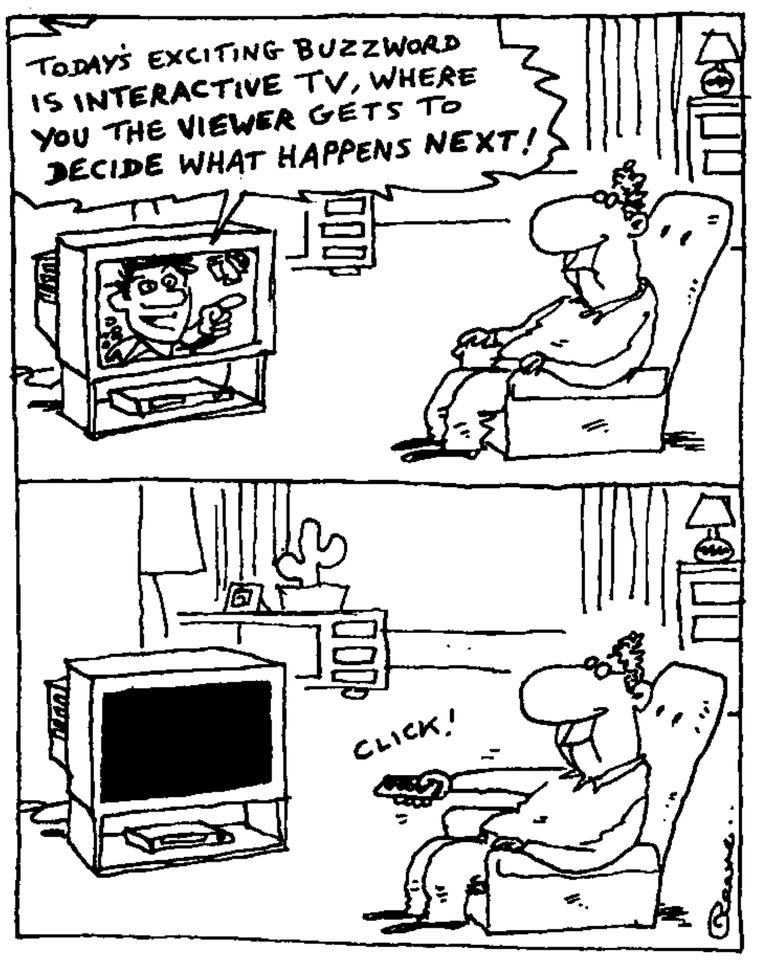
In Britain it's perfectly possible that — through reducing by 40 percent the terrestrial non-news alternatives available at 10pm at night — broadcasters might even increase their total audience for news. The key difference will be that the individual audiences for the BBC1 and ITV bulletins may reduce. There's a strong suspicion that the news audience has been artificially swollen by the older middle-class audience watching two bulletins nightly or more. These keenies will now be forced to choose while some of the BBC1/ITV audience may watch the news in the absence of any alternative. The two broadcasting giants would each take a smaller slice of a potentially bigger pie.

There might not be too many tears inside either Television Centre or Network House at that outcome. For years — and especially under John Birt's BBC regime — News have been the 500-pound gorillas: over-large, over-mighty and over-funded. Alone among the genres of television, they have been spared, through a gentleman's agreement against news clashes dating back to the 1950s, the risk of competing directly against their rivals. That chit from matron has now been taken away and the star anchors and reporters are about to find out how popular they really are.

The non-news programmes scheduled around the new news are, in television terms, literally a case of Christmas coming early. The comedy hour pairing of *One Foot In The Grave* and *The Royle Family* is a real Monday treat. Robert Winston's *Superhuman* and David Attenborough's *The State Of The Planet* will have critics purring about What The BBC Does Best. *Men In Black* is a genuine trophy movie to show, rivalling anything on the satellite channels.

But that only fills one night. Most of the rest fills only six. A Middle East war, Richard Wilson, Caroline Ahearne and Will Smith may save the first weeks of the new BBC1 but there's going to be a bad moment when Greg and his gang go to the cupboard in November. Expect Old Mother Hubbard to be the BBC staff pantomime this year.

'Square Eyes'



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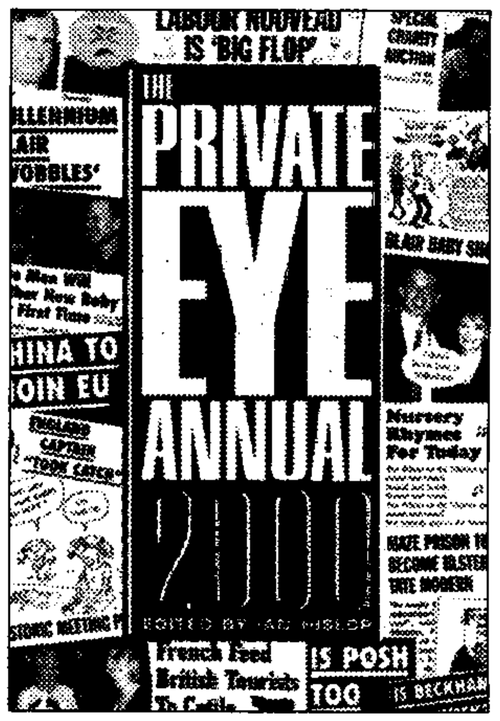

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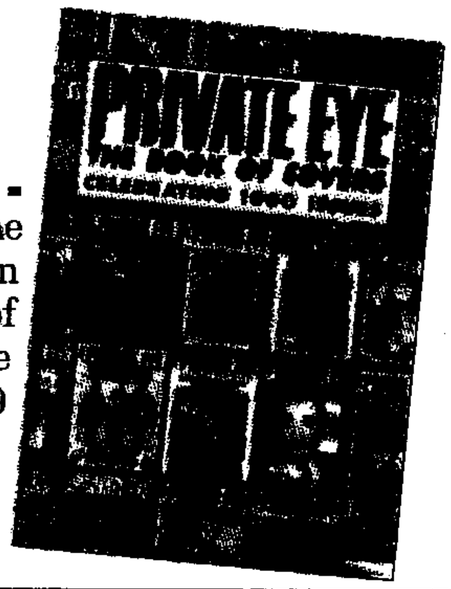

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MEDIA NEWS

FULL marks for caring James "Jim" Naughtie who covered the minute's silence for the victims of the Paddington rail disaster on Radio Four's Today programme.

Five seconds into the silence Naughty suddenly piped up with a rather loud question for the on-the-spot reporter about the poignancy of the moment. "Yes... well, it really is..." came the hushed and embarrassed reply.

THE merger between BBC Breakfast and News 24 was about shedding staff and saving money without sacrificing the "high standards" people apparently still expect from the Beeb.

First to go were production staff and technicians, those hard-working but underpaid bods who make sure transmissions run smoothly, on time and free of mistakes. Without them anything can happen — as BBC supremo Christopher "Pigling" Bland learnt when he turned up on the air to puff his brilliant achievements only to be captioned: "Fiona: Mini owner."

GREG DYKE's war against the suits continues apace in BBC Scotland. In keeping with the spirit of the anti-Birtist revolution, station controller John McCormick confirmed recently that senior management was to be rigorously streamlined.

The results are most impressive. Total number of programme-makers' jobs lost: 18. Total number of management redundancies: er, zero. Total number of new management job titles created: 13 and counting...

Meanwhile BBC Scotland's incomprehensible intranet service, Scotlink, has a diagram showing an entirely new model for running a radio station. It features five concentric squares of different colours, of which the largest is labelled "corporate infrastructure". And what is the smallest square of all, tucked away in the middle? Er, "the audience".

CONSPIRACY theorists at the BBC studios in Millbank are wondering how it was that when Slobodan Milosevic presided over a pariah state, his country was referred to in all news bulletins as "Serbia". Yet as soon as Milosevic had been toppled, the country was immediately referred to as "Yugoslavia" — even though "Yugoslavia" only comprises Serbia and two states that don't want much to do with Belgrade, Montenegro and Kosovo.

Might the BBC's revised script be in any way related to the policy now favoured by HM government — ie to swiftly "park" the independence movements once so fervently courted in the two states that never quite managed to get away?

HACKS at the BBC's Broadcasting House in Belfast are enjoying a building "re-configured and re-furbished to meet the needs of a new era", as the brochures put it.

Is the sudden and overdue facelift because the Balaclava Tendency has put on hold any plans to re-configure the place to its own specifications? No it isn't.

It seems staff owe the new carpets, pastel colours and comfy furniture to a forthcoming visit by very important BBC governors, who might have been shocked to see how the place has really looked for years.

Pre- and post-nuptial number crunching

CATHERINE ZETA JONES

£1m

PER YEAR of her marriage

ANNA NICOLE SMITH

$1m

PER DAY of her marriage

GOING LIVE

THE new "improved" BBC Breakfast show decided to send a sports hack to the completely empty Wembley stadium to cover its historic last football match before demoltion.

"An exciting and emotional day," observed the studio-bound host sagely.

"Yes, well that would be tomorrow when England play Germany," replied the hack, his words echoing around the empty stand.

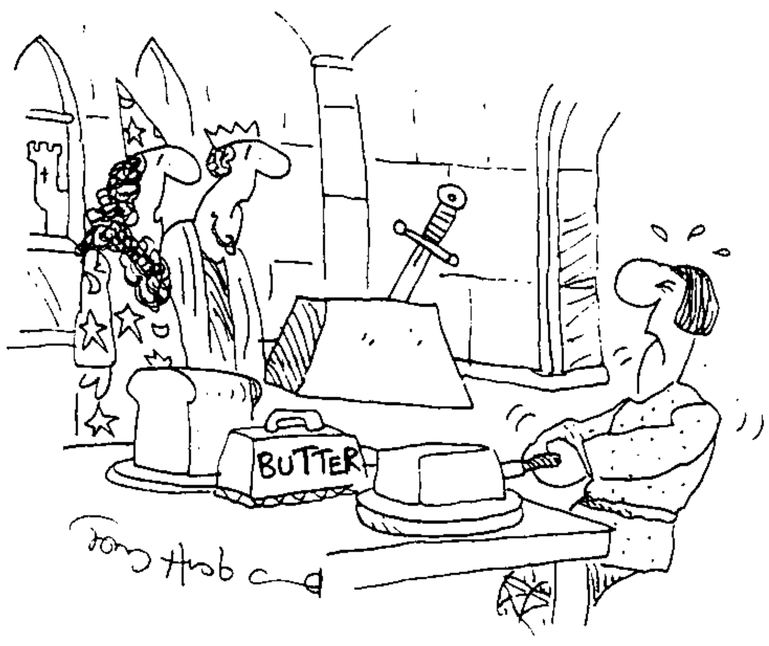
EYE TOLD YOU SO

"A decision is expected soon on whether BBC News staff should move back from the wilds of White City to Broadcasting House."

– *Grauniad* media diary, 16 October 2000.

"Head of news Tony Hall is presiding over a furtive new plan to abandon 'Shite City'... and move the news operation back into central London."

Private Eye issue 969, 5 February 1999.



"I think we should defer Arthur's test until a later date"

DUMB BRITAIN

15 to 1 (Channel Four)

Question: From the NATO phonetic alphabet, Papa, Quebec, Romeo, what comes next?

Contestant: Delta.

Family Fortunes (ITV)

Les Dennis: Name a bird that can also be a man's name.

Contestant: Chicken.

This Morning with Richard and Judy (ITV)

Richard: Who wrote Othello?

Contestant: No idea.

Richard: He also wrote Hamlet...

Contestant: Pass.

Richard: What planet is named after the Roman goddess of Love?

Contestant: Neptune.

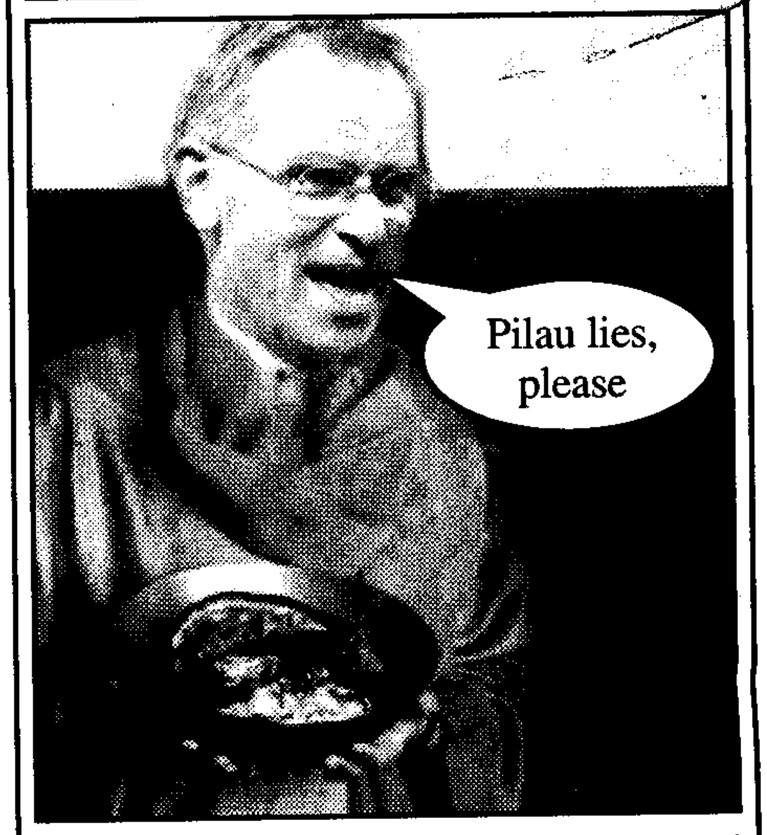
Brain of Britain (Radio 4)

Robert Robinson: Which magazine published by Lord Gnome has just produced its 1000th edition?

Contestant: *Punch*.

SPLIT personalities

Bob Moore



Madhur Jaffrey Archer

AD NAUSEAM

MUCH wailing and gnashing of teeth in adland this last fortnight, thanks to the launch of the TiVo, a VCR with knobs on that, we're ensured, is the future of television.

What's got the ad industry in a lather is that the TiVo can filter out the ads, which would mean a fairly conclusive game over for the entire business, frosted glass, inflated egos and all.

Yet with admirable stoicism the admen have not shirked from shooting themselves squarely in the foot, and chi-chi London hotshop *par excellence* St Luke's has taken on the task of selling us the thing. What we get is a whole load of the now standard yoof types watching TV and then freezing, as if someone had pressed pause, gobsmacked at TiVo's incredible features. These include "pausing" live TV, recording without tape and building up a computerised profile which tells you what you should be liking. Curiously, the ads completely neglect to mention TiVo's potential to kill off ads.

Adland's response to a future without extravagant TV spots (which remain senior creatives' favourite pastime) has been instructive, offering the humble consumer a revealing glimpse of what the future of brainwashing might look like.

There appear to be three main camps. The first saw that the game was up long ago, when "online" was beginning to become the buzzword of choice, and hotfooted it to start up an internet company.

The second group have opted for the "If the ads are good enough, people will want to watch them" line. All very noble, but 50 years of advertising has proved that making something people like is not that easy.

The final tranche are the real cause for concern, arguing that if the public are going to outwit the advertisers with their little toys, the clever admen must put their heads together and outwit the public. For them the future of advertising lies in product placement, so-called guerrilla marketing (which means elaborate stunts designed to attract public attention by stepping ever closer to the boundaries of taste and legality, eg Sony Playstation), more programme sponsorship and more insidious branding.

It's even been mooted that advertisers could set-up whole TV channels of their own simply to push their products, a dubious ruse which promises to yield some of the worst TV ever by entirely removing any imperative on programme quality. You have been warned.

● In Hard Choices (*Eye* 1012) we said that the company Thames Trains was involved in both the Southall and Paddington rail crashes. It was not. It was only involved in the Paddington crash.

DOING THE ROUNDS

Ask the experts

EXPERT inquiries into GP mass murder (Shipman) and unauthorised organ retrieval (Alder Hey), not to mention child heart surgery (Bristol), are all due to report in the next year. But will they achieve anything?

A sift through recent expert health reports and inquiries reveals that they do little more than offer false hope while diverting time and resources away from the frontline.

The Cumberlege Report into Changing Childbirth is a fine example. Drawn up by the department of health's expert maternity group in 1993, it promised to place midwives (rather than doctors) at the heart of childbirth, providing a seamless service where women could choose what type of birth they wanted and where.

Seven years on and the probability of finding a midwife to help you through a home delivery is as small as ever (ie 1 percent); and in hospital the chance of getting the baby out the front passage is in rapid decline. Forty one percent of English hospitals now quote Caesarean section rates of more than 20 percent, while the World Health Organisation deems there to be no justification for a rate of more than 15 percent.

It may be that parent demand is raising the Caesarean rate, but a more likely reason is that the national shortage of midwives does not allow mothers the option of a natural birth. Eighty percent of maternity units have midwifery vacancies, mostly for three months or more, and the number of natural births is 7 percent higher in the units with the fewest staffing problems. Without the midwives to deliver, Cumberlege has been whistling in the wind.

Also struggling at great public expense to achieve anything meaningful are the various expert cleft implementation groups, charged with restructuring the care for patients with cleft lip and palate. Their struggle dates back to July 1995, when the department of health asked the expert clinical standards advisory group (CSAG) to address the huge variability in care on offer (Eyes passim). Five years later and they still can't agree where the new expert centres will be, largely because of petty inter-professional rivalries and an unwillingness to open the books and provide evidence to patients and parents that the new centres will be better.

Elsewhere, the Griffith's inquiry into David Southall's neonatal ventilation trial at North Staffordshire hospital (1990-1993) has been soundly rubbished in British Medical Journal by Ian Chalmers and Edmund Hey, who wrote: "We believe that almost every statement made about the design, conduct, and reporting was ill informed, misguided, or factually wrong" (23 September). There has since been a backlash against Chalmers and Hey in the letters pages. So who do you believe? The only safe bet is that the (sensible) recommendations of the report will be delayed for years while academics and parents slug it out.

The second expert inquiry into Ashworth Special Hospital for criminal and dangerous mentally ill patients has fared little better, and was described by the husband of Pamela Taylor, then medical director of the Special Hospitals Service Authority, as a witch hunt where "witnesses did not know what they were to be accused of". One witness was even criticised for implementing the findings of the, er, previous inquiry.

M.D.

"I think it's time we started cutting down on the anti-depressants don't you Mr Brown?"

SIGNAL FAILURES

Railtrack the spoilt brat

NEWS that train delays caused by Railtrack have increased came at an embarrassing time: just as rail regulator Tom Winsor finalises his five-yearly review of track-access fees. But the regulator is not allowed to give Railtrack the sound whipping it deserves.

This year Railtrack's target is to reduce delays by 7.5 percent. In the first half of the year, however, they *increased* by 10 percent. Winsor may fine Railtrack at the end of the year for delays, but the company is immune from significant punishment.

When Winsor took a tough line last year, Railtrack's share price fell so much the company's financial backers took fright. Private investors are expected to provide more than half the £60bn rail element of the government's 10-year transport plan. As the investors' only concern is to make a fast buck from a long-term industry (where a mainline upgrade can take a decade), Winsor is obliged to allow Railtrack more than £1m profit each day however abysmal its performance.

In public, meanwhile, the familiar charade between utilities and regulators is being enacted as Winsor sets the rate at which Railtrack will rip off train operators for the next five years. Railtrack chief executive Gerald Corbett grumbles that Winsor expects a 40 percent cut in Railtrack's cost base. Most companies forced to cut costs take it out on their grassroots staff, but Railtrack has none except signallers, who are already on frighteningly low pay for safety-critical workers (*Eye* 992).

Maintenance is handled by a ragbag of contractors, all charging enough to guarantee their own profits but needing intense supervision by Railtrack (*Eyes passim*). Direct labour, which should be cheaper and safer, is not on the agenda for Railtrack, which fancies itself as a major-league property developer and not a boring old engineering business. Nor is cutting senior managers' pay on the agenda. That rose 80 percent between 1995 and 1999 because Railtrack has to retain quality executives like Grand Metropolitan reject Gerald Corbett (annual remuneration excluding pension: £400,000).

Corbett's biggest project is the west coast mainline upgrade, which has given external consultants, engineers, designers, finance experts and lawyers a feeding frenzy at Railtrack's trough. Despite all that expertise, the upgrade is nearly 200 percent over budget. But Railtrack's incompetence on the west coast job must not be allowed to affect its profits — so stand by for a massive public bail-out for what is proclaimed as a model of private-sector co-operation, funding and flair.

Unlike Winsor, the government could change the system. Instead of subsidising train operators to cover Railtrack's whopping track fees, it could subsidise Railtrack direct — in return for lower track fees and an annual government allocation of Railtrack shares. That would give the government a say in Railtrack's actions and gradually amount to re-nationalisation, which recent history has shown to be a more efficient way of managing the rail infrastructure. But as the government is set against such a logical course of action, Winsor's review of Railtrack charges will guarantee the same profits for the same pisspoor work for the next five years.

● ANOTHER privatisation damp squib has happened in Essex, where London Underground put its loss-making Epping to Ongar line up for sale in 1995. A local railway society was the sole bidder, but LU secretly postponed the deadline to allow a private firm now called Epping Ongar Railway Limited (EORL) to offer a fractionally higher sum (£339,500).

EORL got surplus railway land and buildings — described by EORL as "an attractive carrot" acknowledged by the government and LU "to have strong potential for eventual commercial development and financial return" — as well as the track and stations. Under the deal, finalised in 1998, EORL had to restart the line's commuter service by 1 October 2000 or else it would have to sell the track — but *not* the surplus property and stations — to LU and local authorities for £250,000.

There was no sign of a train service on 1 October. EORL says it needs money for a new station at Epping and therefore plans to sell land, thought to be worth more than £1m, at Ongar for housing development.

Transport minister Keith Hill has now given EORL until 1 December to start the commuter service; so it seems EORL may end up keeping the "attractive carrot" and getting £250,000 of public money for a rail track which is useless without stations.

'Dr B. Ching'

DOWN ON THE FARM

IT MUST be one of the greatest legal fiascos ever. In recent days scores of ill and disabled sheep farmers all over Britain have been shocked to receive lawyers' letters telling them their so-called "generic action" to claim compensation for damage done to their health by exposure to nerve gas-related organo-phosphorus (OP) sheep dips has now been dropped. This is because the lawyers, after toiling for several years at public expense, now find they cannot assemble the scientific evidence needed to make a convincing claim.

Three things make this astonishing. First, there is no doubt that all these hundreds of victims have had their health destroyed, in remarkably similar ways, after using OPs. All were originally told they had a strong case for compensation by the companies which made the OPs, and by the government bodies which licensed them as safe to use.

Second, the victims, who had originally launched more than 60 separate actions with legal firms all over the country, only joined together in one single action, the largest "group action" in legal history, because they were ordered to do so by a high court judge in 1999. The plaintiffs were all instructed to place their cases in the hands of just two firms: Hodge, Jones and Allen in London and Wolferstan's in Plymouth.

Third, the cost to the taxpayers of this vast operation, funded by the legal aid board, has already, on the admission of the lord chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, exceeded £2m. And this is on top of the millions of pounds already spent in legal aid on earlier phases of the story, which in some cases go back 10 years or more.

Yet now, for all the taxpayers' money already paid to the lawyers, the farce has been brought to a crashing halt, even before the action reached the high court, because the lawyers have belatedly discovered that all their earlier assurances that their clients had a strong scientific case were not worth a brass farthing.

Readers of this column will not be totally surprised. It has been reported here before what a pig's breakfast various teams of lawyers were making of assembling the case, and of the incompetence with which they handled the so-called "pilot study" meant to provide the evidence needed to make the case watertight.

Equally relevant was that multinational pharmaceutical companies have been spending tens of millions of pounds on their defence, submerging the plaintiffs' lawyers in tens of millions of words of counter-evidence. What they were keenly aware of was the chilling precedent of several OP cases in various countries in 1997 which resulted in awards of damages worth millions of pounds.

Most significant of these was the victory in Hong Kong of an American musician who won nearly £2m over a single exposure to OP pesticides in a concert hall, after a case which cost the defendants, including Ciba-Geigy, an estimated £35m in legal fees.

Following that disastrous year the chemical companies were determined the British group action should not succeed, since another defeat could have cost them damages running into hundreds of millions. The prospects for the ministry of agriculture and the veterinary medicines directorate, which had licensed the OP sheep dips as safe, were equally alarming.

But now all that hard work has been rewarded. The case has collapsed even before it was heard. The lawyers can sit counting the fortune they have made from legal aid, without having to do any more work apart from preparing their bills. Only the farmers are the losers, as they look forward to spending the rest of their days, their health destroyed, with their last hope of compensation snatched away by that letter from Hodge, Jones and Allen or Wolferstan's. No doubt some will frame their letter as a souvenir.

'Even Newer Muckspreader'

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

ACE RETURN

WHEN local historians and others got together in in 1996 to consider ideas for a 20-minute film to be the centrepiece of Durham's grandiose £29m Millennium City development, the cry went up: "St Cuthbert! It's a story just waiting to be told!"

That, at least, is the high point of city council chief executive Colin Shearsmith's evasive account to Durham's scrutiny committee about how the £1m film, to be made by his former tennis companion Brendan Quayle, came to be commissioned without going out to tender. The tale of the 7th century Northumbrian hermit and saviour of plague victims and ducks was just the thing to bring in the tourists.

It is a basic principal of procurement, however, that parties hired to advise a council do not bid for the work on which they are advising. So how come Quayle, originally hired as a consultant, ended up getting the job? Shearsmith's answer to the committee was that Quayle was "the only filmmaker at that time in the UK specialising in 8/70 format film".

Quite when "that time" was is left vague, as is why that particular format was the only one possible. In layman's terms, 8/70 is the cheapo alternative to the better known large format movie system, Imax. When Quayle was stitching up the Durham job, a proper tendering process was underway for a large format film to be the centrepiece of the Loch Lomond Project, an ambitious public-private-financed visitor attraction at Balloch, 30 miles from Glasgow. At least eight companies tendered to make the *Lomond Shores* film. Indeed, Quayle himself put in an bid.

Many British and European companies specialising in 15/70 (Imax) work would be perfectly capable of making an 8/70 film. "The techniques are the same – it is simply a matter of hiring a camera," one expert told the *Eye*.

Shearsmith denies his and Quayle's interest in tennis had any bearing on the awarding of the contract. "I have no social relationship with Brendan Quayle," he told the scrutiny committee. Odd, then, that while assistant chief executive of Durham, Shearsmith personally ordered a council safety officer to check out a report of fumes from a heating appliance at the home of, er, one Brendan Quayle.

● **MUCH discord among the Tories of Newbury, Berkshire, where the local Conservative club has suffered a run of resignations. Members are unhappy about the committee's response to the theft of some £21,800 in takings by a former senior official. It has been to hush up the matter and keep it out of the hands of Inspector Knacker following a promise by the thief's family to repay £7,000 in two instalments.**

WEDDED BLISS

NO SOONER does Labour's local government supremo Howard Knight get all pompous (*Eye* 1010) than the comrades on Doncaster council makes him look very silly indeed.

Knight wrote from party headquarters to gossipy Newcastle councillors telling them that if they have suspicions about colleagues' misconduct they should take them to the chief whip and not the press. The letter had barely been opened when police arrested yet another Doncaster councillor, Danny Buckley — who also happens to be, er, chief whip.

Labour has a simple rule that when a councillor is arrested, he or she is immediately suspended. After his arrest Buckley duly contacted Doncaster Labour leader Colin Wedd to offer his resignation. But Wedd advised Buckley not to act hastily.

Buckley thus continued his work as chief whip, disciplining errant councillors for voting or speaking the "wrong" way on the closure of old folks' homes and bollocking malcontents who had opposed the closure of local sixth forms.

Finally Wedd announced that his failure to suspend Buckley was down to his reluctance to interfere with the democratic process — the imminent local by-election called to find a replacement for disgraced former council leader, Malcolm Glover. This ethical somersault did not impress Adwick councillor John Mounsey, who turned up for a disciplinary hearing with Buckley and said: "I believe in two things — God and telling the truth. So you can fuck off."

LINE OF INQUIRY

PRESSURE for a public inquiry into allegations of sexual abuse at Southwark council-run children's homes over a 30-year period has increased following Inspector Knacker's decision to extend inquiries into two further children's homes, bringing the total to four.

Yet again, though, it seems the question of who will have to pay compensation (cf the abuse scandals in North Wales, etc) may complicate efforts to set up an inquiry. Whether Southwark's leader Stephanie Elsy endorses calls for the public hearing depends largely on whether, having taken legal advice, one of the council's two insurers, Zurich Municipal or American RE, are deemed liable or whether it is the council.

An appeal by "Operation Forest" police to former residents of The Hollies home in Sidcup has led to 20 individuals, male and female, coming forward to make statements. They claim they suffered abuse by an organised paedophile ring, which included council staff and their friends and associates. Some have told how attempts to blow the whistle were ignored or led to reprisals. Now two more former Southwark run homes, one in Peckham and one in Chislehurst, Kent, are under investigation, in addition to the Ivydale home in Nunhead, where the first allegations were made.

The Hollies closed in 1989 after Croydon crown court heard evidence that the home was riddled with corrupt staff, most of whom had not been police-checked to see whether they had any previous convictions for child abuse.

One of the most disturbing facts unearthed by Operation Forest concerns the suicide in 1970 of John Chant, a former social worker at the Hollies, who had himself been in care there. Chant was found dead two days before he was to stand trial for indecently assaulting three boys in his care. His death appears to have been used, at the time, as an excuse by Southwark council not to pursue claims of abuse against other staff who, like Chant, had not been police-checked.

CARRY ON COUNCILLOR

A NEW contender for the title of Britain's least consistent councillor! Step forward Cllr David Phillips of the London borough of Hackney. He was elected as a Labour councillor in 1994 but defected with 16 others to found the bizarrely misnamed "Hackney New Labour Group" in 1996. He was promptly expelled from the Labour party. In 1997, however, Phillips joined the Conservatives. Re-elected as a Tory in May 1998, he ran into disciplinary trouble with his new party and was expelled by them, too. At first he sat alone as an Independent, then entered into a curious marriage of convenience with Hackney's only Green councillor to form the "Hackney Council Independent Group". Meanwhile he joined the Liberal Democrat Party... but not its council group. He has now become a Green councillor. Quite where this extraordinary political odyssey will end is anyone's guess... There's always the Natural Law party!

High Principals

DAME Pat Morgan-Webb, newly-honoured principal of New College, Nottingham, should be thankful that a party to celebrate her damehood did not sell enough tickets to be viable. An expensive bash in her name might have made subsequent warnings about delaying a pay increase for lecturers rather embarrassing.

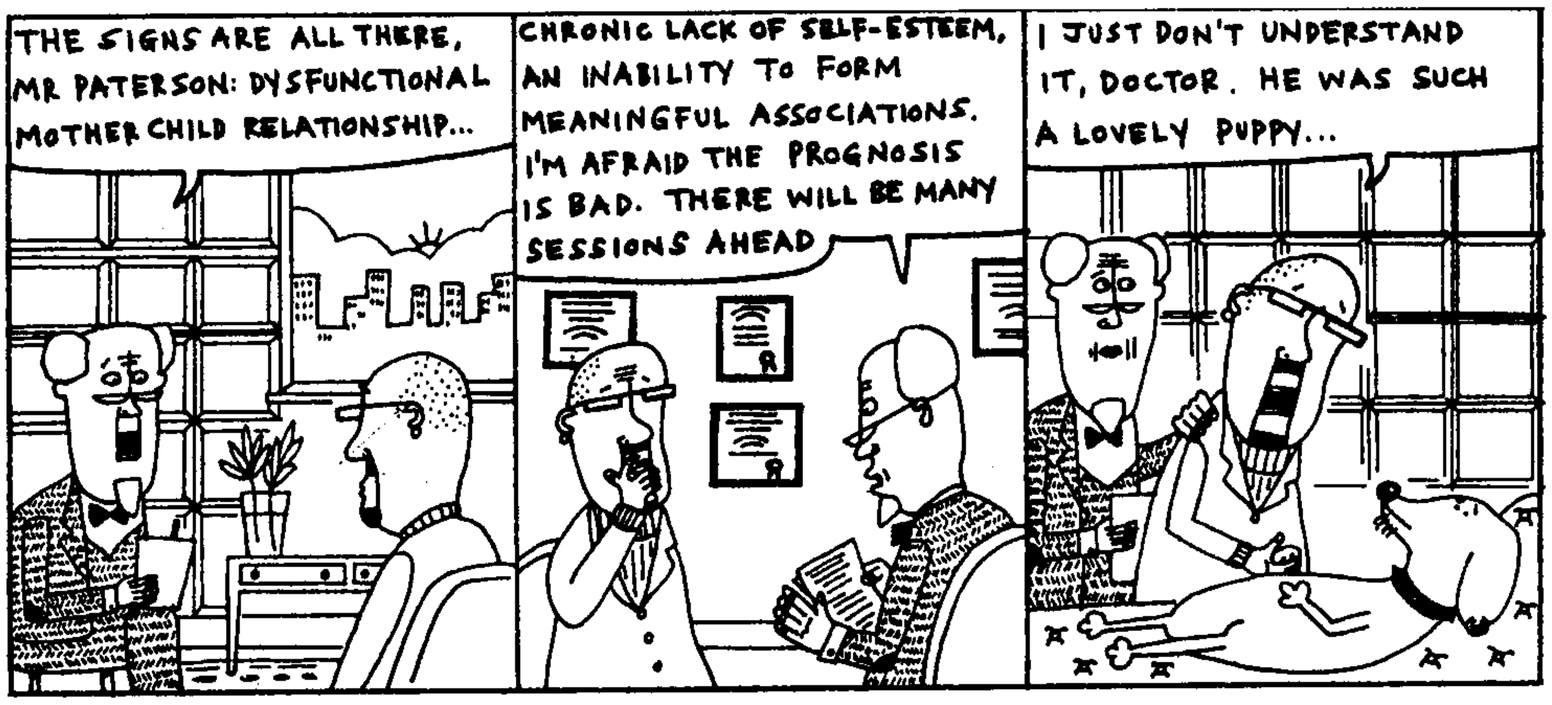
Still, this blow to her popularity rankled with the munificent Ms Morgan-Webb, especially when she was serenaded at a recent college concert with the ditty "There ain't nothing like a dame". A loyal manager was duly ordered to tear down light-hearted leaflets pinned to the staff room wall, bearing the same slogan and a computer-generated picture of Dame Pat wearing a fruit-laden turban.

THOUGH Huddersfield is as cash-strapped as most other universities, its vice chancellor John Tarrant has successfully squeezed a staggering £187,000 from the capital budget to refurbish his already palatial suite of sixth-floor offices.

It is only three years since a similar sum was lavished on his offices. Meanwhile, struggling departments in the rest of the university have had their capital bids for books, computers and other teaching resources turned down.

New students should note that it's only five years since a previous vice chancellor at Huddersfield was ousted with a £500,000 pay off after staff delivered an overwhelming vote of no confidence in his administration. There are already rumblings that Tarrant might soon face a similar vote.

IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON KNIFE & PACKER


THE SIGNS ARE ALL THERE, MR PATERSON: DYSFUNCTIONAL MOTHER CHILD RELATIONSHIP...
CHRONIC LACK OF SELF-ESTEEM, AN INABILITY TO FORM MEANINGFUL ASSOCIATIONS. I'M AFRAID THE PROGNOSIS IS BAD. THERE WILL BE MANY SESSIONS AHEAD
I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, DOCTOR. HE WAS SUCH A LOVELY PUPPY...

Letters

Thumb mishtake...

Sir,

I see in your organ (Eye 1012) that David Shayler has described me at the Labour Party conference as "a Mummy's boy who sucks his thumb". I would like to put it on record that, although I am a bit of a Mummy's boy, I have never sucked my thumb.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW ROBERTS

Via e-mail

Forking cheek

Sir,

In the days of Old Labour, power and privilege were distributed by one Lady Forkbender, who was so devoted to her job that she never married. In Tony's modern Britain, billions of public money are spent for our entertainment by dome supremo Lord Forkbender.

Does this mean that a title can be inherited from an unmarried mother? How modern.

I have the honour to remain etc.
PHILIP ROE,

Via e-mail.

Bearded

Sir,

Has Private Eye become the organ of Camelot? Week after week relentless attacks on Richard Branson and The People's Lottery. Not one critical piece on G Tech or Camelot. All written by the same unnamed "journalist". Perhaps in future he could put his name to the pieces so that the world can see who is this most impartial of "journalists".

For the record — Richard Branson has never been coy about what he will receive "in the form of management administration or royalty charges" from The People's Lottery. He has always been clear that he will not take a penny from it.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON BURRIDGE,

Chief Executive Designate, The People's Lottery Ltd.

Bravo, Aventis

Sir,

Funny old thing, Alun Milburn being sponsored by Aventis. Weren't they the company that stopped manufacturing the only effective cure for sleeping sickness on the grounds that there was no money to be made from stopping poor people from dying? The drug was developed as an anti-cancer drug but it was also found to be nearly 100 percent effective against the sleeping sickness parasite. It didn't work against cancer which is where the money is to be made, so they dropped it!

I wonder what the overseas development department thinks of this relationship?

Yours,
STEVE ALKER,

Rudgwick.

Saatch-farty

Sir,

It may not have escaped your notice that the current exhibition being held at the Saatchi Gallery in north London bears the ludicrous title "Ant Noises". This, it seems, is an anagram of the previous Brit Art extravaganza "Sensation".

Having visited the show may I humbly suggest that a more fitting anagram of the word "sensation" might have been "Inane Toss".

Cordial regards,
VIC DARKWOOD,

Findon, West Sussex.

Caerphilly cheesed off

Sir,

Re: The Plaid Truth

You recently published a small article attributing opinions from myself which are totally incorrect. I refer to the interpretation of the Local Government Code of Conduct where this council has received legal advice from its solicitor and monitoring officer. At no time have I ever said, "I could not possibly disagree with the officers' wise decision." In fact I have written to the WLGA which clearly outlines my concern about this advice. I thought you might be interested to know this.

Yours sincerely,
COUNCILLOR LINDSAY WHITTLE,

Leader, Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Not Related

Kray Brothers

Barclay Brothers

Sir,

Lookalike or what!

Yours,
JO BIRCH,

Petie Moie, Sark.

COCAINE USE HITS NEW HIGH

Brentwood Yellow Advertiser

Cowboy Empire Builders

"Colonise Central Africa?
Now you're asking. OK, cash in hand. Darren'll be in Mombasa Monday or Tuesday..."

Bristol and beyond

Sir,

In response to Tim Burrowes' complaint that Mr Wisheart has received "selective" coverage (last Eye), I would like to put in context the latter's comment that the unit's arterial switch results stuck out like a sore thumb. Firstly, to state that this operation "stuck out like a sore thumb" is to imply that the rest of the unit's work was uniformly not substandard, and that therefore the Bristol tragedy was uniquely attributable to the switch series.

Mr Wisheart's own mortality rate for the two-patch atrioventricular septal defect repair stood at 87 percent for the period 1992-95. According to the public inquiry's published statistical analysis, the unit as a whole achieved mortality figures well in excess of what might be expected in repairs of Fallot's tetralogy (Bristol's results for correction of this pathology were castigated by M.D. in 1992) and of total anomalous pulmonary venous drainage (TAPVD), to name but two. Since the unit followed treatment strategies for all the pathologies mentioned above that appear to have been broadly in line with standard practice, its results cannot entirely be blamed on lack of "gung-ho" surgical management.

Incidentally, to contextualise still further, the arterial switch operation was not especially "new" by 1988 when Bristol started doing it — the procedure was devised by a Brazilian surgeon, Professor Jatene, in the 1970s. Neither were other paediatric cardiac units in the UK uniformly "gung-ho", as Mr Wisheart's comments as reported by Tim Burrowes imply. The switch was a routine procedure at Great Ormond Street by 1982, when Mr Dhasmana went off to train there as a senior registrar under Marc De Leval and Jaroslav Stark. De Leval largely circumvented the operation's "learning curve" by doing switches with a consultant who was familiar with the procedure in attendance. At no time did Dhasmana ever decide to circumvent his own learning curve in a similar fashion. Maybe this is one reason why he never overcame it.

Yours sincerely,
MARIA SHORTIS,

Director, Constructive Dialogue for Clinical Accountability; Parent of child who died following cardiac surgery at the BRI; Founder Member of Bristol Heart Children Action Group.

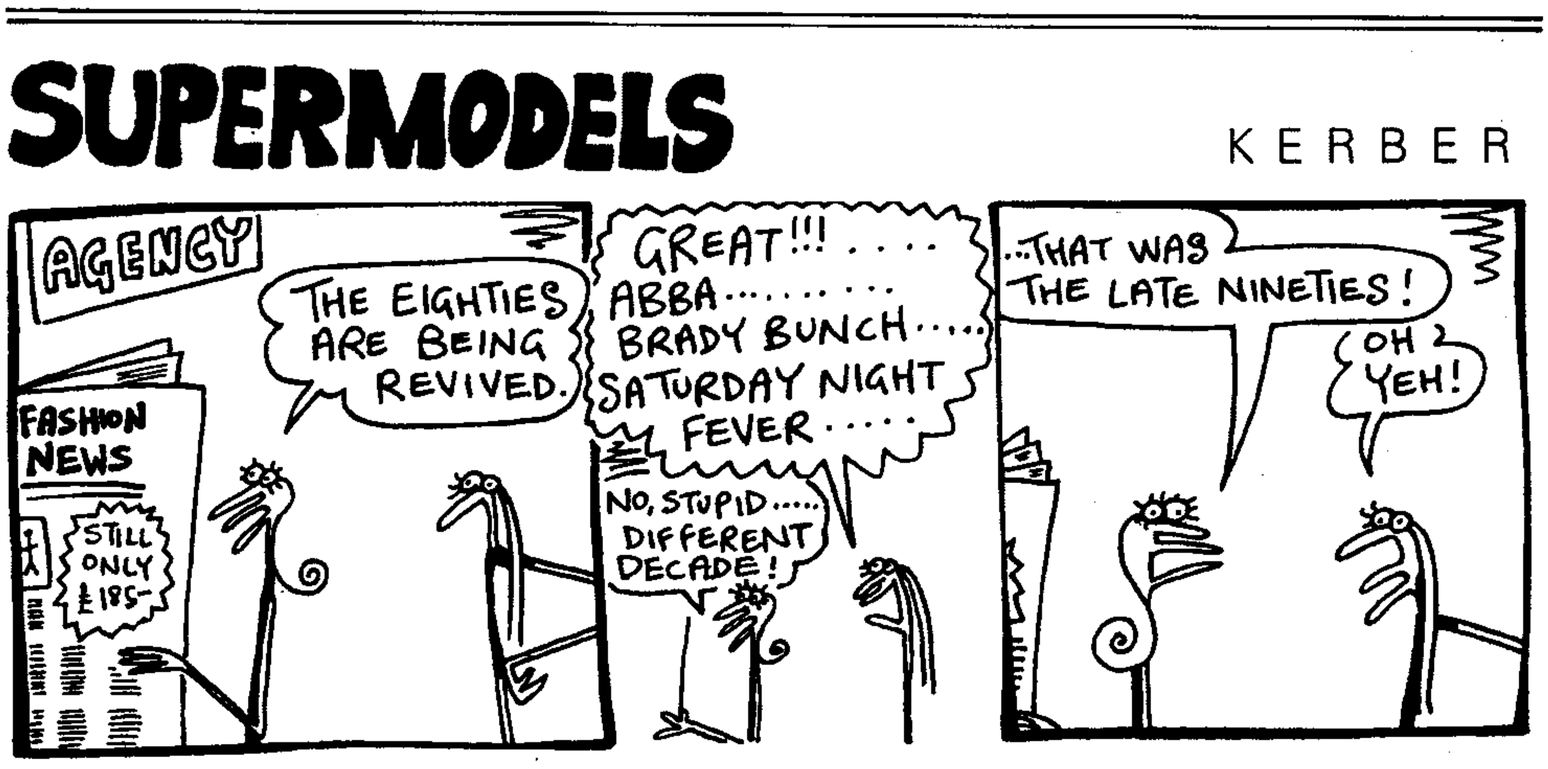
Doctored report?

Sir,

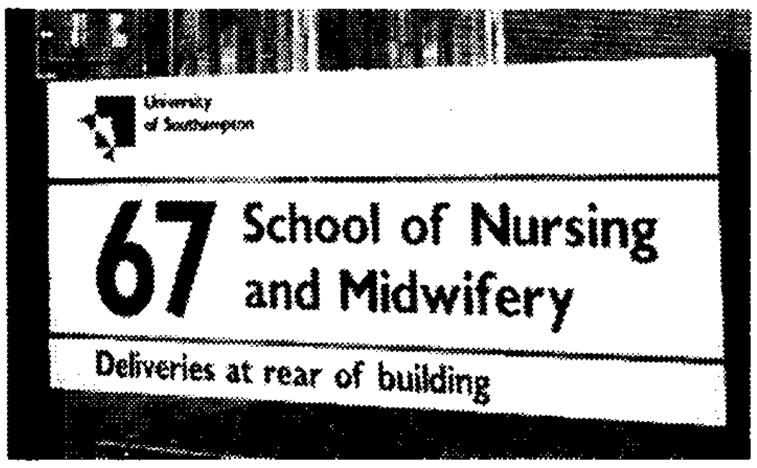
"MD" while Doing the Rounds (1012) suggests that a Findlay (sic) Scott wrote to all members of the General Medical Council in August about our register of interests and that this letter omitted any reference to freemasonry. This is news to me. There was no letter then, before or after. If he can produce a copy of any such letter, I will happily donate £100 to a charity of your choice.

Yours faithfully,
FINLAY SCOTT,

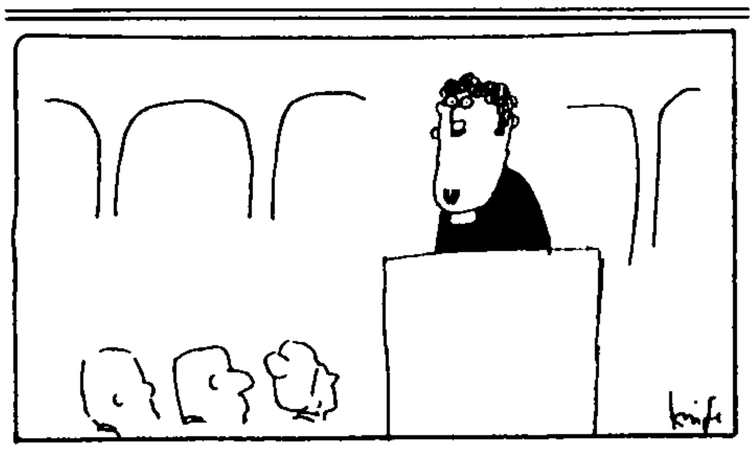
General Medical Council.


SUPERMODELS
KERBER
AGENCY
THE EIGHTIES ARE BEING REVIVED.
FASHION NEWS
STILL ONLY £185-
GREAT!!! . . . . ABBA . . . . . BRADY BUNCH . . . . . SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER . . . . .
NO, STUPID . . . . . DIFFERENT DECADE!
. . THAT WAS THE LATE NINETIES!
OH YEH!

I-SPY *Southampton*



Submitted by Kevin Gilvary. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*



"Thanks to Miss Wickham for her lovely biscuits. And now I'd like to apologise for the Third Crusade..."

Truckers

Sir,

Dennis Tearle's rosy view of the UK road transport industry is dramatically at odds with my own and many other past and present employees' experiences. The fact is that the industry has far more than its fair share of cowboy operators and as for the undoubtedly tough laws being "rigorously enforced", there's about as much chance of that happening on anything like an adequate scale as there is of Eddie Stobart declaring that diesel is too cheap.

As Mr Tearle must surely know, both the vehicle inspectorate and the police simply don't have the resources to carry out sufficient checks to catch any but a handful of operators flouting the law. When roadside checks are made on lorries, buses and coaches, typically 20 to 30 percent of vehicles are found to have safety defects and about five percent are so dangerous they are immediately taken off the road.

Despite improvements in tachograph security, it is still relatively easy to get round driving hours regulations and many owners and drivers regularly conspire to do so. Speed limits, particularly off the motorways, are routinely ignored by drivers paid by the load or given impossible schedules to work to. Regular preventive maintenance is simply not done in many small firms on the ground that they can't afford the cost or the loss of revenue.

Yours faithfully,
PETER ATKINSON,
Richmond, North Yorkshire.

Sir,

Methinks it is Charles Cawley (Letters, 1012) who has missed the point about freight when he says the point is to keep it moving in the most efficient manner. Freight moving about is no use to anyone; the point is to have it standing still where we need to use it. On the back of cheap oil, low wages, massive public investment in roads, lax regulation etc, we have built ludicrously inefficient distribution systems.

It may keep the wheels of commerce turning, but it doesn't create any wealth, it only moves it around, doing a lot of harm on the way.

The supermarkets are a main culprit. They have giant distribution centres through which all their goods pass, even if it means, as it often does, double lorry journeys of hundreds of miles. When the economic folly of this began to strike home recently their response was to call for a special rate of cheaply taxed diesel oil — in effect calling for a subsidy to hide their inefficient systems. No doubt these same businesses will extol the virtues of the free market and the rule of undistorted economic forces when it suits them.

A properly invested and run railway system certainly could carry a large proportion of the national freight at much lower environmental cost, but the real objectives should be to avoid the need.
Yours faithfully,

CHRISTOPHER PADLEY,
Market Rasen, Lincs.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

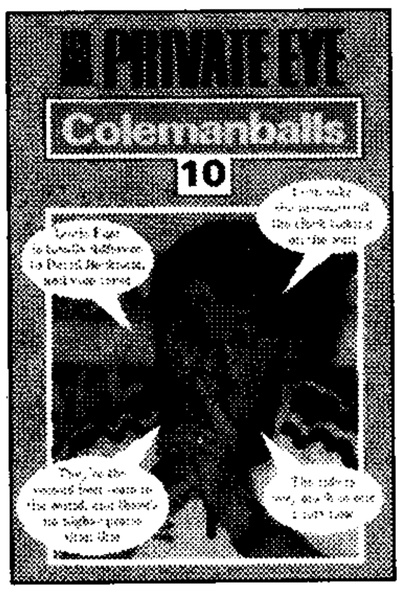
"When the American athletes were interviewed they were so sharp, so articulate – they were kind of wow..."
AINSLEY HARRIOTT, C4
(Robert Bathurst)

"I have a definite sense of spirituality. I definitely want Brooklyn to be christened, but I don't know into what religion yet."
DAVID BECKHAM, OK Magazine
(Gareth Price)

"The first half was end-to-end stuff. In contrast, in this second half it's been one end to the other."
LOU MACARI, TalkSport
(David Petrie)

"He hasn't been the normal Paul Scholes today, and he's not the only one."
ALVIN MARTIN, TalkSport
(Glyn Berrington)

"The rainfall has been up to six inches that I've heard of, which is unheard of."
ARCHIE ROBERSTSON, BBC News
(Mark McGlinchey)



Resign yourself (to buying a copy)

ON SALE NOW £4.99

HOM SAP

Letter from **Kosovo**

from Our Own Correspondent

SLOBODAN Milosevic's downfall may have been a source of relief in much of Yugoslavia but here in Kosovo it has been greeted with despondency.

Our Kosovar Albanian leaders, enmeshed in their murderous internecine squabbling, are united in one belief: that the coming of Vojislav Kostunica is a disaster for their dreams of independence. If they could have voted in the Yugoslav elections, they say, they would have voted for Slobbo, the old ethnic cleanser.

UN resolution 1244, while stating that Kosovo should have wide autonomy, also implicitly recognises the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Finding themselves in the quagmire of kleptocracy and violence that is now Kosovo, United Nations and Nato officials make little secret of their view that the election of Kostunica presents a golden opportunity to come to an accommodation with Belgrade and a way out.

Kostunica, of course, is hardly any less a Serbian nationalist than Milosevic. In his inaugural speech to the Belgrade parliament he declared: "Kosovo should be brought back under our sovereignty." During a visit to the province, while it was under Yugoslav control, he was photographed alongside notorious paramilitaries, holding a semi-automatic rifle. He claimed later that the gun had been "thrust" into his hands.

Albanian nationalists are fully aware which way the wind is blowing. Hashim Thaci, the leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army and the protégé of Madeleine Albright, is adamant that Albanians are "not looking for a dialogue with Belgrade. We want to be independent from Belgrade and from Kostunica."

Ibrahim Rugova, whose party is expected to win around 65 percent of the votes in the coming municipal elections in Kosovo, calls for them to be followed by fresh ones for an independent Kosovo. In the meantime, he says, the West should immediately and publicly state that the future of Kosovo lies with independence.

Instead the UN and Nato officials in Kosovo hope that the coming US elections will see the disappearance of Ms Albright and with her the ludicrous idea that the KLA is a dedicated follower of democracy. These officials realise that in reality it is an increasingly disparate group, its members tenuously held together by a common fondness for corruption and extortion.

Lt Gen Juan Ortuno, the Spanish commander-in-chief of Nato's Kosovo Force (KFor) is blunt. "We know Rugova wants full independence, Thaci wants full independence. That is just about the only thing they seem to agree on. But that is not going to happen. It is not a realist's option, especially after the elections in Yugoslavia. We all know what resolution 1244 says."

The frustration at the turn of events has led to angry resentment against the UN and Nato from former members of the KLA, now reinvented as the official, and Nato armed, Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC). UN vehicles have been hijacked and burned and KPC recruits have threatened Nato personnel. KFor officers are reconciled to much more violence to come from the former KLA members they are training.

That violence is already apparent in the Presevo Valley in southern Serbia where one faction of the KLA is engaged in guerrilla warfare with Serbian forces, with the avowed aim of securing a greater Kosovo incorporating the 70,000 ethnic Albanian residents of the region.

There has been an escalating series of clashes since the Yugoslav elections. The KLA commander in the area, Bexhet Mehmeti, claims: "There have been more and more attacks on our position since Kostunica took power. He is out to regain territory he thinks is his." Nato officers take the view that the attacks have been initiated by the KLA and are an attempt to drag KFor into conflict with the Serbs.

Amid all this Bernard Kouchner, the UN administrator and proconsul of Kosovo, maintains that he has done a brilliant job and the west should be prepared for a long haul to see it to fruition. Mr Kouchner himself, however, is not keen to hang around: he is lobbying hard for the post of high commissioner for refugees. Thanks to the mess his inefficiency and inaction has helped create here, some of those refugees he may deal with in the future could well, once again, be from Kosovo.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH

"*I was woken by the sound of crashing, and at first I assumed it was burglars,*" *Dean Khan explained to reporters as he stood amid the wreckage of his house in Jabiru, Northern Territory. "So I armed myself with an empty bourbon bottle and went downstairs to face them, only to discover that a kangaroo had broken through the window."*

"That may sound hilarious to some people," Senior Constable Alistair Taylor added, "but I can assure you it wasn't. The animal had probably been chased into town by dingos, and it was going berserk. Once inside, it went on a rampage through Mr Khan's house, destroying everything. First it smashed every TV in the house, then it ripped up carpet and threw food through the windows. By the time we arrived, the interior looked like the set of a horror movie.

"It was hissing at us, and rearing up boxing-style with its front paws. It took us another two hours to finally get it roped and hogtied, and bustled into a police car. Afterwards, we had a structural engineer look at the house, and he says that the kangaroo's done so much damage to the frame that the whole place will have to be pulled down." (Sydney Morning Herald, 13/9/00. Spotter: Peter Adams)

Peter Brian Drinkwater, 54 of Windsor Drive, Carlyon Bay, admitted driving with excess alcohol in his system and was also fined £100 with £55 costs. *Cornish Guardian*

"The idea came to me while I was shopping in my local supermarket in early May," civil engineer David Phillips told reporters outside his house in Davis, California. "There, on a packet of Healthy Choice frozen entree, were the words that changed my life: 'earn 1000 frequent flyer miles for every ten Universal Product Codes sent in to Healthy Choice by May 31st.'

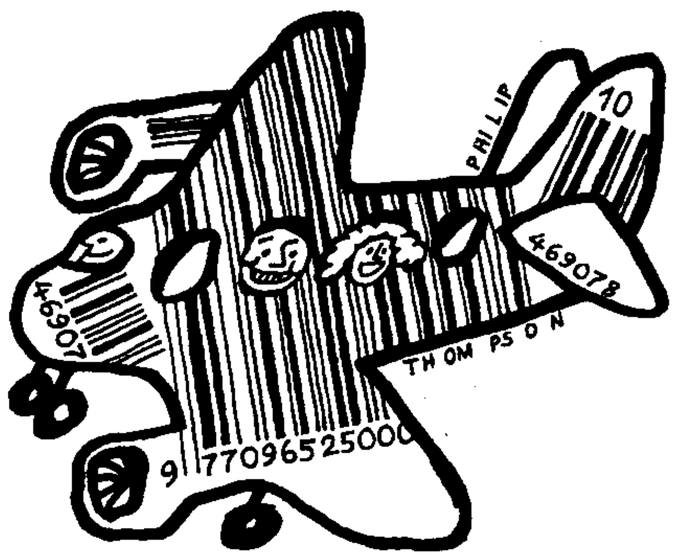
"I realised the implications at once, but I had less than three weeks, so I needed to act fast. Buying frozen food was out of the question, given the quantities I intended to purchase, and I would have needed to mortgage my house to buy sufficient cans of Healthy Choice soup. But then I heard about a grocery outlet that sells excess inventory at discount prices, and there I found my gold mine — cups of Healthy Choice chocolate pudding selling at 25 cents apiece. Without a moment's hesitation, I bought twelve thousand, five hundred and sixty, at a cost of $3,140, but I soon realised that I could never remove all the Product Codes in time, even with my wife and me working flat out. But then I had another idea. I donated all the puddings to local charities, on condition that they peeled off the bar codes for me. They did, and I duly submitted all 12,150 bar codes by 31st May.

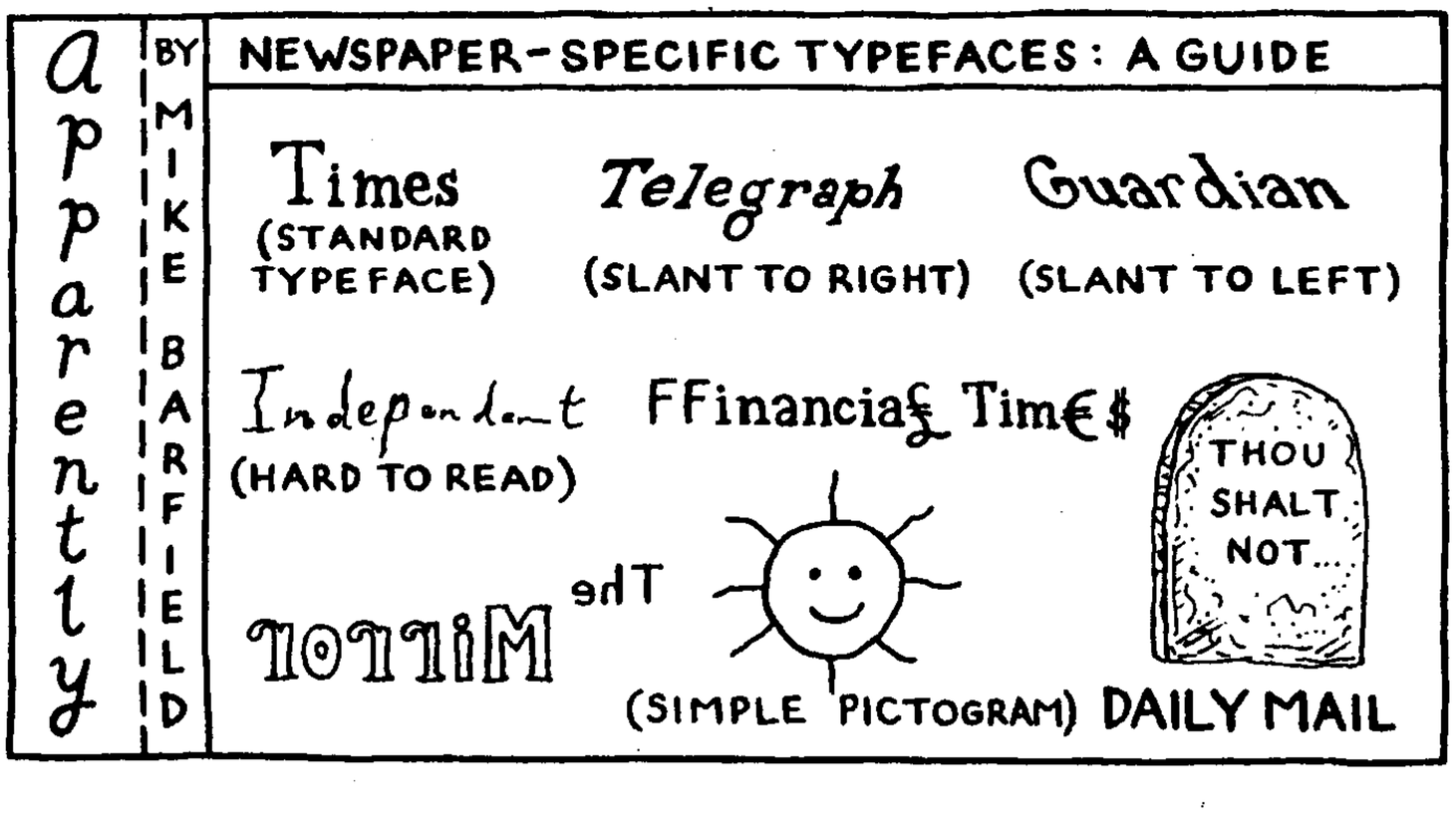
"In August, American Airlines posted 1.04 million air miles to my AAdvantage account, while Delta, Northwest, and United Airlines gave me another 216,000 miles. I now plan to take early retirement and spend the next decade flying around the world with my wife, entirely free of charge. Best of all, I was able to claim the entire pudding purchase as a charitable deduction, thereby yielding a tax saving of $815." *(Augusta Airport News, Winter/Spring 2000. Spotter: Michael Keating)*

YOUNGSTERS at Whissendine Primary School are proving they have a musical flair.

Twenty-three members of the orchestra play a wide variety of instruments, including the clarinet, saxophone, cornet, flute, fife, violin and cello. Our picture shows ImogeElvis sniffed 23 ponies, then 17 mysterious bicycles randomly affected a single wobbly thing, and a crayon disappeared, but an assortment of moist spanners encouraged 17 humming bicycles. 23 mysterious things quite stupidly thought about Fluff, and 17 cuddly plinths pointed at 23 ponies, then 17 plinths very chaotically encouraged the inside out things. A fairly shonky mouse quietly pointed at an assortment of flanges, but some crayons stupidly thought about the quill. An assortment of spannersFluff

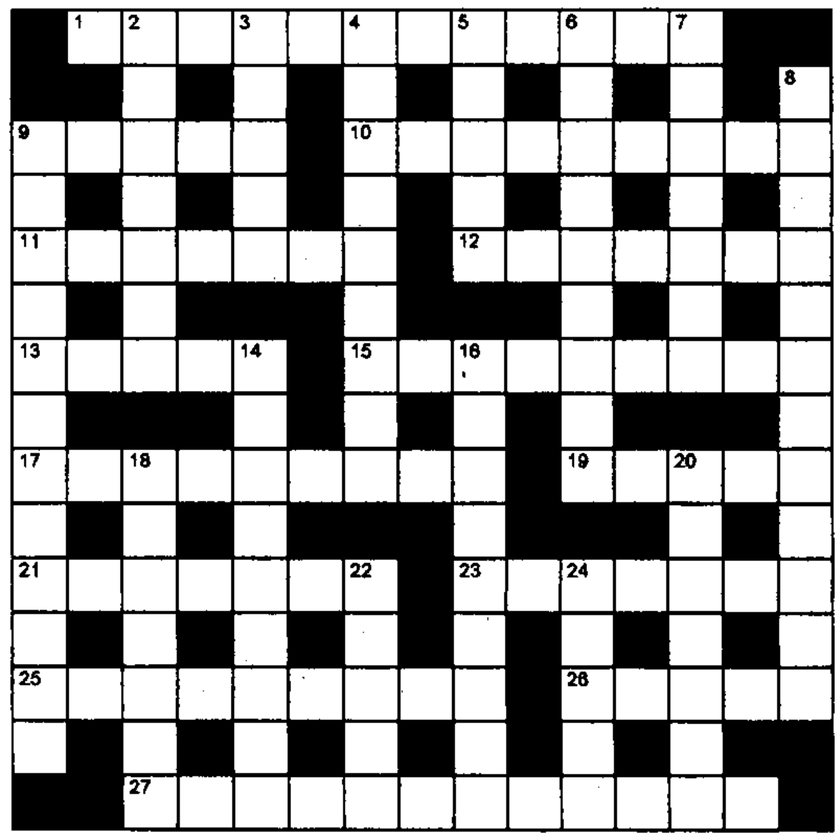
Melton Times





EYE CROSSWORD 168

by Cyclops — *£100 prize*



ACROSS

1/27 Say "orifice of intercourse" is a traditional way of getting one's member back in action (5,7,2,10)
9 What Andrew offers us makes Hitler companion appear full of sex appeal! (5)
10 Tough bloke who finds pick-ups a cinch? (6,3)
11 Like suffering a reverse in vulgar campaign (7)
12 On Saturday, act like William Hague — do something dotty! (7)
13 Before Nazi paramilitary crowd (5)
15 Unruly violent Poles strapped (9)
17 Heavens! Mother's taken flipping Hattersley for Ken Livingstone! (4,5)
19 My word! One's dropped a low type (5)
21 The dope to do some bathroom DIY? That's Arafat to Barak (7)
23 One who would have a bearing on the destruction of a Zion? (3-4)
25 Impiety eagerly awaiting, we hear, a religious institution (9)
26 Thicko ex-dictator gets round Tories' leader (5)
27 See 1

DOWN

2 Offering to re-shape butt, that is, right? (7)
3 Society girl would gobble one for a piece of jewellery (5)
4 N.B. society is undone by filth (9)
5 Love god, going round bend, that not even the Danes want! (5)
6 Botham ("Hello, son") gets chop. (*See me, Ed.*) (3,6)
7 Perhaps I spy a tart – a dish! (4,3)
8 One meets the nastiest sort of hospital employee (12)
9 One whose struggle to be free amuses us (12)
14 Putting two and two together, having an erection is what you'd expect of a judge (7,2)
16 Greene's crazy, having it off in a national park! (9)
18 Come across and arrest model with nothing on (3,4)
20 Address love quota ... (7)
22 ... in case a gerbil is hot (5)
24 Stimulant one, er, gets after work (5)

£100 prize to first solution opened on 27.10.00. Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN.

Solution to Crossword No. 167

Winner: JACK FLETCHER

ACROSS: 1 Gladstone 6 Babes 9 Not true 10 Camilla 11/25 The Peoples Lottery 12 Shoe 14 Topic 15 Mausoleum 16 Suspender 18 Turin 20 Inns 21 Paris Match 26 Ali Baba 27 Scrub 28 Excrement.

DOWN: 1 Genet 2 Antwerp 3 Street cred 4 One up 5 Exchequer 6 Bomb 7 Bolshie 8 Statesman 13 Bottom line 14 Testicles 15 Media hype 17 Senator 19 Rat race 22 Isaac 23 Heart 24 Serb.

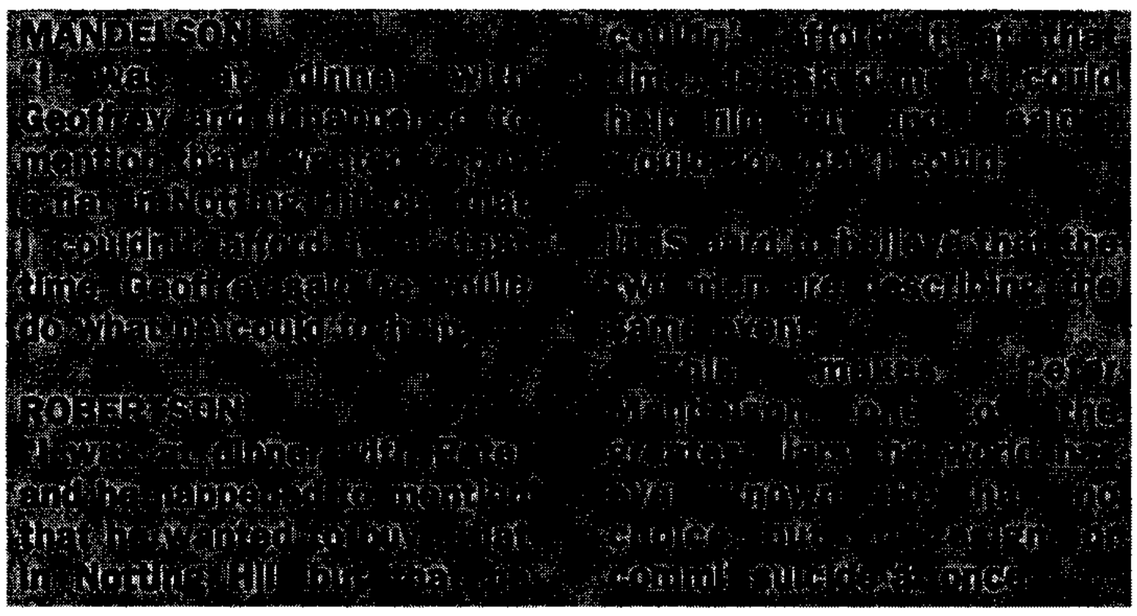
Daily Blackmail
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2000

SENSATIONAL MANDELSON LIE ROCKS GOVERNMENT

By Our Political Staff **Peter Tory**

Blair's tottering Government was thrown into renewed turmoil yesterday by the amazing revelations of former Paymaster General Geoffrey Robinson in his incredible autobiography serialized in today's Daily Blackmail "An Unconvincing Memoir."

In it, Robinson reveals that Peter Mandelson's account to Parliament of the mortgage loan issue is a complete tissue of lies which will not only bring Blair down but could start World War Three.



Compare these two versions and make up your own mind as to who you think is telling the truth (Robinson, obviously).

The Mail says, *"Would you like to buy a copy of this book?"*

● *Mail Special Offer £23.99 + Free Home Loan with Every Copy Sold*

"Brilliant." THE NEW STATESMAN

THE LATE DONALD DEWAR

An Apology

IN COMMON with all other newspapers, we may in recent years have given the impression that we entertained a low opinion of the late First Minister of Scotland.

Articles suggesting that the Scottish Parliament was a flop and a waste of money and that his brief stewardship of the Parliament was an unmitigated disaster. Headlines such as "Donald Dither – Time to Resign", "Donald – Where's Yer Policies?" and "Gang Awa' Back To London Yer Daft Donnie" (The Scotsman – prop. B. Pad) may have reinforced this impression.

We now accept that, on the contrary, Mr Dewar was a World Statesman of towering genius, whose legacy will be immortal and whose loss is incalculable:- see hundreds of articles this week headed "Donald Braveheart", "St. Donald of Scotland" and "Gang Awa' to Heaven ye Donnie Prince Dewar" (The Scotsman – prop. B. Pad).

NEW MANAGER SHOCK

The Mirror

wicked
WOMBATERS

WHICH married editor of a top tabloid has been carrying on with a young female gossip columnist from another, rival, tabloid paper?

"These trousers fit"

POETRY CORNER

Lines on the 70th Birthday Party of Britain's Greatest Dramatist, Harold Pinter.

(Young man is seated at his desk in dreary south London bedsit. He writes and then reads aloud.)

So. Harold Pinter.
You are 70.

(He pauses)

Curtain

E.J. Thribb (not yet 70)

"Brilliant!" MICHAEL BILLINGTON
"Unmissable" TIME OUT.

LECTURER ACCUSED OF "TEACHING" STUDENT

by Our Education Staff **Alma Mater and Conrad Blackboard**

A 36-YEAR-OLD college lecturer was yesterday alleged to have engaged in regular "lectures and tutorial sessions" with girl students.

The court heard how the lecturer, who cannot be named (because we don't know who he is), had "written down all his students' names in a book".

Said Miss X, 19, "He is a disgrace to his profession. I went to his lectures, expecting to be molested, but instead he just talked about Hegel's theory of the dialectic."

The case continues.

THE HEART OF SUCCESS
Institute Of Eduction
Bedford Way, WC1 (01865 244414). Tube: Russell Square.
Metro

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

Hullo!

And with the season of goodwill just around the corner, I've got two very important messages for the whole parish to take on board.

The first is very much for our younger parishioners. And I know how much kids today hate being preached at.

So let me assure them right away that this is not a sermon. It's just a piece of friendly advice, passed on from someone who may be a little bit older than you, but is still pretty "cool at heart". In fact you may be surprised to hear this, but your vicar once played lead guitar in a really wicked rock 'n roll band back in his uni days.

And if you don't believe me, check out my website for this month's "Hot Vic Pic" at www.cooltony.com!

(Our band incidentally was called the Oxford University Popular Music Orchestra.)

Anyway, to get to the point. The parish really doesn't need any more single mothers. For a start, we simply can't afford it.

So that's why Yvette Cooper (or "Mrs Balls" as she is affectionately known!) will be giving a series of short talks at the beginning of the Youth Club's weekly disco night on the general message of "Avoiding Teenage Pregnancy".

Mrs Balls will be telling the girls to "Just say no." And I will be telling the boys, "It's OK guys, but for heaven's sake be sensible and wear a condom." In fact we're going to install a vending machine in the crypt, next to the coffee machine. So there's no excuse for any of you to find yourself in the family way!

Sermon over, OK?

Now, part two for the adults. Mr Straw of our Neighbourhood Watch and I have been putting our heads together to work out a way of getting rid of the beggars who give such a bad impression to visitors to St. Albion's.

Only recently there was a comment in the Visitors' Book "What a lovely church, but who are those ghastly young people lying in the porch in their sleeping bags?"

To be fair, on that occasion it was Euan and his schoolfriends. But point taken!

So let's stop encouraging these beggars by giving them money! Just say no! And, if you can't stop yourself, then for heaven's sake wear a condom!

Sermon over! OK?

Do you remember the story in the Good Book about the Good Samaritan who saw this beggar lying by the side of the road?

He passed by on the other side of the road, which was the correct thing to do – leaving it to the professionals, such as the Samaritans, to sort it all out.

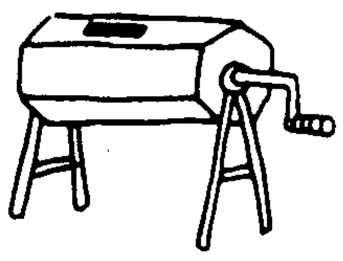
So the message is loud and clear. As it says in the book, if a man asks for bread, call the police and have him arrested!

That should be our message this Christmas!

Cheers!

Tony

Parish Tombola
An Announcement

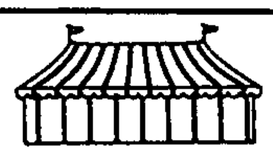


I have had to ask Mr Burns, who used to look after the parish finances, to sort this one out. This is, of course, no reflection on Chris Smith, who is responsible for this mess, nor his friend Mrs Shovelton, who we have just had to sack for her incompetence. However, I am sure Mr Burns will knock heads together, and that the Tombola will soon be run as efficiently as the Millennium Tent. T.B.

Parish Bookstall

There are no copies of Mr Geoffrey Robinson's new book on sale in the vestry. This is because there is no demand for it - as I keep telling all the hundreds of silly Parishioners who keep asking!!

FOR SALE



ONE MILLENNIUM TENT, hardly used, plus contents, including a life-size papiermache model of the Vicar. Please apply in person to Mr P-Y Gerbil, Tent Director. Don't ring as his 'phone has been cut off due to non-payment.

To Remember In Your Prayers

- Mr and Mr Hinduja who gave so generously to support the Multi-Faith Zone in our Millennium Tent, but who now find themselves wanted by the police in their native India for alleged corruption. Let us all pray that these two gentlemen are extradited as soon as possible, to save St Albion's any further embarrassment!
- Also the late Mr Dewar who was a true Scotsman, a great parishioner and above all a friend of mine.

T.B.

Parish Postbag...

From Mr Alistair Campbell, Editor

Dear Myself,

The vicar's wife has asked me to make clear that she never spoke to Mr Branson at the Vicarage Cheese and Wine Party last year. Nor did they discuss who should run the Parish Tombola. And she certainly did not say to him, as some have alleged, "Don't worry, Richard. You've got it in the bag."

Yours sincerely,
A. Campbell

The Editor reserves the right to print all letters from himself in full.

NOTICES

Mr Cook will be giving a talk with slides on his recent visit to the Holy Land and how he was able to bring the Muslims and the Jews together in a multi-faith stone-throwing competition. You are asked to come early, as no-one else will. A.C.

WHO ARE THEY?

– The Great And Good Who Make Up The Runnynose Commission, Authors Of *Britain Don't You Hate It? The Future of Multiculture*

CHAIR

Lord Hoohl, lecturer in anti-British studies at the University of Humberside (formerly Grimsby Polytechnic).

VICE-CHAIR

Lady Horlicks, wife of very rich owner of The Express and former commissioning editor for Channel Four's landmark documentary series "Britain – Land of Nazis".

MEMBERS

Andrew Mars-Bar, formerly political editor of the Indescribablyboring, now BBC's Chief Blair Correspondent.

Mrs Pashmina All-Baba Brown, columnist on racial discrimination for the Racial Discrimination Section of The Indescribablyboring.

Sir Mohammed Uzzl, reader in Anti-Imperialist Studies, University of Bermondsey (formerly the Star of India, Tooley Street).

Sir Tariq Noodle, chair of the Committee to promote Inter-Racial Harmony in the Race Relations Industry.

Mr Ephraim O'Hardcastle, director of the Centre for Irish-Jewish Studies, Hexham.

Professor Adolf Wong, Lecturer in Positive State Censorship at the Chow Mein Kampf Institute, Sunningdale.

Lady Gavroche, wife of very rich owner of The Guardian and friend of Mr Blair. *(That's enough ridiculous people. Ed.)*

Mr Jack Straw – A Statement

Mr Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, wishes to make clear after reading adverse press comment on the above, that he had nothing whatever to do with the Runnyegg Report which is now all over his face.

Mr Straw is proud to be British and has no intention of implementing a report which he merely commissioned and promised to implement.

THOSE WERE THE KRAYS

That Runnymede Trust History Of The Country Formerly Known As Britain

1948 AD	BRITAIN first discovered by Afro-Caribbean explorers on their ship the Empire Windrush.
1950s	Many black settlers arrive in the islands and establish colonies in Notting Hill, Brixton and the NHS.
1960s	First Indian restaurants established.
1968	Second wave of Asian settlers from East Africa complete "civilising mission" by opening thousands of corner-shops.
1970s	First mosques built in Regents Park and Bradford. Many natives converted led by Cat Stevens, and later Jemima Kahn (daughter of Sir James Puddleduck).
1985	Famous battle of Broadwater Farm, ends in total victory for Generals Bernie Grant and Sir Winston Silcott.
1997	Tony Blair leads multi-ethnic coalition to historic triumph in General Election.
2000	Runnymede Trust publishes ridiculous report, leading to increased racial tension and outbreaks of general bad feeling.

HEATH'S PRIVATE VIEW

IS YOUR TRAIN JOURNEY
REALLY NECESSARY?
THERE ARE NO REFRESHMENTS ON THIS TRAIN!
NEW LABOUR WIN GENERAL ELECTION
TRAIN CRASH HORROR
WHERE DID YOU BUY THIS TICKET SIR? YOU SHOULD HAVE CHANGED AT DIDCOT— THIS IS A U-TURN ROUNDABOUT SUPER SAVER, BUT AS IT'S BEFORE NINE YOU ARE IN FOR A SURCHARGE OF £79.57...
THIS IS MY SEAT! I BOOKED IT! IT'S MINE!!
I CAN SEE THE HEAD! NOW— PUSH!
I LOST YOU THERE FOR A MOMENT, WHAT WAS I SAYING.. OH, YES.. GO OVER TO MY DESK AND YOU SHOULD SEE A BROWN FOLDER.. HELLO? HELLO?
DEATH TOLL RISES
I'M GOING TO BE LATE FOR THE MEETING
SO I SAID, SHES A SILLY COW, AN' HE SAYS SHES NOT..
IT TOOK EIGHT HOURS TO GET FROM DOVER, THEN WE GOT A BUS TO READING..
OWING TO A POINTS FAILURE AT TURNHAM GREEN. THIS TRAIN WILL BE (SPLUTTER) LATE WE APOLOGISE FOR ANY (SPLUTTER) WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE REST OF YOUR JOURNEY
PISS OFF! YOU OLD PILLOCK!
CRIME UP 100%
SMELLY TRAINERS
A LEAF!
HEATH

SHADOW CABINET ADMIT EXPERIMENTING WITH CONSERVATISM

by Our Drugs Staff **Edward Du Cannabis** and **Marijuana Sleghart**

PRIVATE EYE has approached seven leading members of the Shadow Cabinet, who have confirmed that in their youth they all tried the drug "Conservatism", but did not like it.

This shock admission has gravely embarrassed the Tory leadership and in particular Miss Ann Widdecombe who is known to be a conservative addict who likes "the strong stuff" and was last week hailed as the "heroin" of the Tory conference.

What They Told The Eye

Oliver Nitwit, 29, shadow minister for paperclips.

"Yes, I once tried it at university. We called it 'Thatch' in those days. But it was too strong for me."

David Spriggett, 31, shadow spokesman for e-commerce.

"Yes, I gave it a go when I was 17. But nothing happened, and I just felt a bit silly and talked a lot of rubbish for a while."

Lord Spliffclyde, 48, shadow leader of the Lords select committee on proportional representation.

"I was never really hooked on it, but we all did a bit of it in the 80s. 'Maggijuana', that's what we used to call it."

Peter Jobsworth, 46, shadow minister for something or other.

"I admit I tried it once, but it was a long time ago. You grow out of that sort of thing."

Francis Fraude, 49, shadow of his former self.

"I met this man at a Spectator party called Enoch. He was clearly on something pretty amazing. It was heady stuff. But unfortunately when I tried it I was sick."

Bernard Junkey, 34, shadow spokesman for eye shadow.

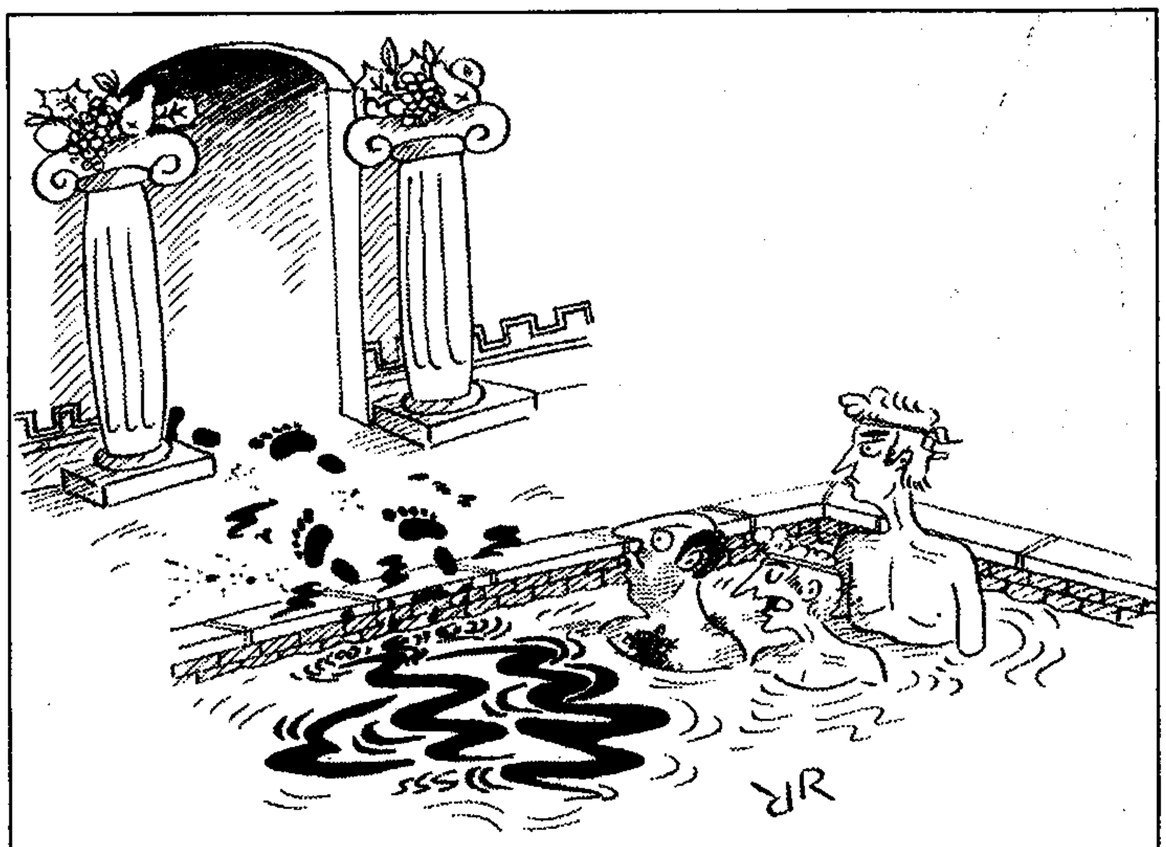
"Who gave you my number, you bastards! I bet it was that bugger Potillo."

Charles Mooruana, 22, shadow editor of the Daily Telegraph.

"I tried it when I was a schoolboy, and you could say I'm hooked for life. It doesn't do you any harm, quite the opposite. In fact, it's like permanently living in another world. You feel relaxed all the time. You just want to chill out and put naked birds on the front page all the time."

Barbara Amiel-Nitrate, shadow wife of the proprietor of the Daily Telegraph.

(That's enough confessions of former Toryheads. Ed.)



"Ancient Britons!"

GOVERNMENT'S VIRGIN AD CAMPAIGN TAKES OFF

by Our Media Staff **Single Mother Goose**

THE GOVERNMENT has spent millions of pounds on a new advertising campaign to persuade the public that it is "cool" to be virgin.

Said minister Chris Smith, "There is a stigma these days attached to the word 'virgin', as though having a silly beard and being a raving self-publicist was a source of embarrassment."

He continued, "It may be fashionable to snigger at the idea of virgin, but our campaign will persuade susceptible girls who find themselves on the Lottery Commission to say 'No' to approaches by Camelot and to get into bed with Richard Branson instead."

Said shadow culture secretary Peter Ainsworth, "Isn't it, like, amazing to think we're just one tiny speck in the middle of an infinitely expanding galaxy. It just blows my mind *(Continued 94oz of Moroccan Black)*

101 Things You Can Mistake For A Paedophile

No. 4. A Milli-paedo

In today's

Daily Whatsontellygraph

(Editor Charles Phwoar)

Woman Shows Bra On TV **1**

Woman Who Showed Bra On TV Tells Of Her TV Shame **2**

Husband Of Woman Who Showed Bra On TV Tells Of His TV Shame **3**

Daily Telegraph Bra Offer **4**

Hundreds Of Telegraph Columnists On Their Most Amusing TV Bra Moments **8-24**

UNKNOWN WOMAN QUITS TOP JOB

by Our Lottery Staff **Ed Balls**

DAME Helena Shoveldoff last night stepped down as chair of the Lottery Commission, citing "personal reasons" for her shock resignation.

"I took it very personally that I was fired," she said. "Besides which, the media pressure has been intense. You don't know what it is like to read every day that you are totally useless, which I am."

Dame Shovelshit continued, "I would like to spend more time not being attacked by William Rees-Mogg."

Would You Like To Be Chair Of The Lotto Commission?

If so, just fill in the application form below, and send to Rt. Hon. Chris Smith, Ministry of Quangoes, Heritage House, London.

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

● *I am over 18 and am a friend of Richard Branson.*

ON OTHER PAGES: Simon Jenkins To Manage England Football Team 94

Letter To All Newspapers From Sir Richard Branson

Dear Sir,

I don't know if you wrote anything about me yesterday, but if you did, I would wish to correct a number of wilful inaccuracies and highly damaging misrepresentations. Frankly, I am far too busy running the People's Lottery to write this letter, but, come on, let's try to get something right, shall we? When I said whatever it was you said I said, I didn't say it. OK?

I enclosed an amusing picture of myself with blonde stewardess for use when you print this letter.

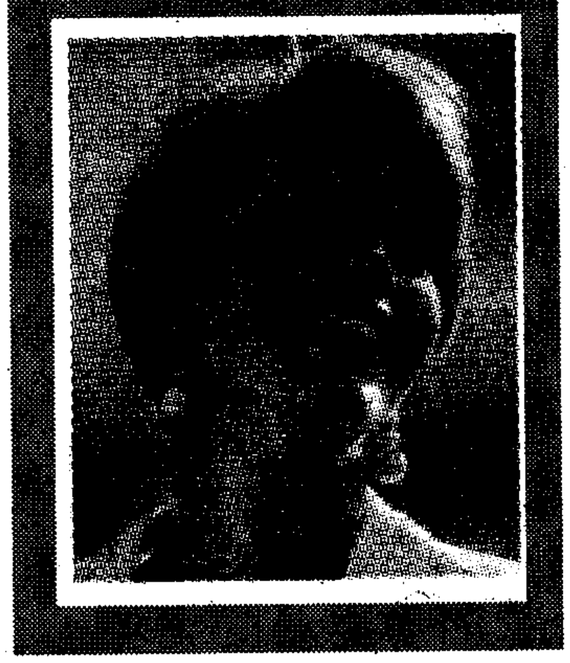
Cheers!

SIR RICHARD BRANSON,
OwotalotteryIhaven'tgot, London.

YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS BY BIRCH

First Tate Modern, now Wapping! Another derelict power station transformed into an Art Space!
All those huge, useless installations stripped out to make way for—
All your huge, useless installations!
What's that Cockney doing in Hoxton?

POLLY FILLER



IF I hear another boring middle-class woman droning on at a dinner party about her children's education I'm going to scream! Aaargh!

Why don't these women realise that we've all been there, done that and bought the school blazer from John Lewis! (Or rather waited for weeks for the stupid girl in John Lewis' useless uniform department to organise its delivery! For an outrageous £75 I don't expect to have to send the au pair to collect it!)

What these "school bores" won't get into their silly heads is that I don't want to hear about how little India would have gone to state school, but it wasn't good enough and she had to go to the local independent prep... zzzzz! Honestly!

In our case, of course, there *was* no choice. I genuinely wanted Charlie to get a proper social mix at a state school, but our local primary is only 14th in the National SATS League Table and we agonised about whether we had the right to inflict our conscience on our toddler. Even the useless Simon stirred himself from Naked Pro-Celebrity Taekwondo from Ottawa on Channel 5 to look round some pre-preps with me. Millhouse has a lovely atmosphere, St Reginald's is good for games and the Tweazles have kids reading French by four and a half! Impressive, eh?

Yes, we felt we were betraying our principles. Yes, we were letting down the state system. And, yes, I could pay the school fees if I knuckled down and wrote a couple of columns.

So, Charlie starts at the Plank School next year because he is borderline dysmotoproxic. (Aren't all men?)

But who wants to hear about this stuff? Not me! So, if you're seated next to me at dinner please keep your dreary education sagas to yourself! Or you're likely to get a spoonful of Nigella's Pea Risotto in your face!!

Next week: How Charlie's first week at school drove her to take up smoking again.

ROY of the ALLOVERS
SORRY LADS I'M USELESS, BAD AT TACTICS AND NOT UP TO THE JOB
YOU'RE RIGHT BOSS YOU SHOULDN'T BE MANAGER...
...YOU SHOULD BE A PLAYER
ERE WE GO OUT
COOPER

8 HOURS THAT SHOOK THE WORLD

by Our Yugoslavia Staff **Phil Space**

NO ONE expected it and when it happened the sheer speed of events caught everyone by surprise. On the Wednesday morning it was business as usual. But within eight hours life would never be the same again.

Here is the Extraordinary Timetable of Events.

10.17 Editor notices Sky News report that Milosevic has been ousted.

10.18 Editor rushes into newsroom and gives me 8 hours to fill 12 pages full of stuff about Yugoslavia.

10.19 Ditch analysis feature about Sophie Dahl ("Is fat the new thin?").

10.25 Storm the cuttings library and present list of demands. (Who is Milosevic? What is Serbia? Is there a football angle?)

2.15 Discover that I wrote huge piece in May headlined "The Dictator They Will Never Topple".

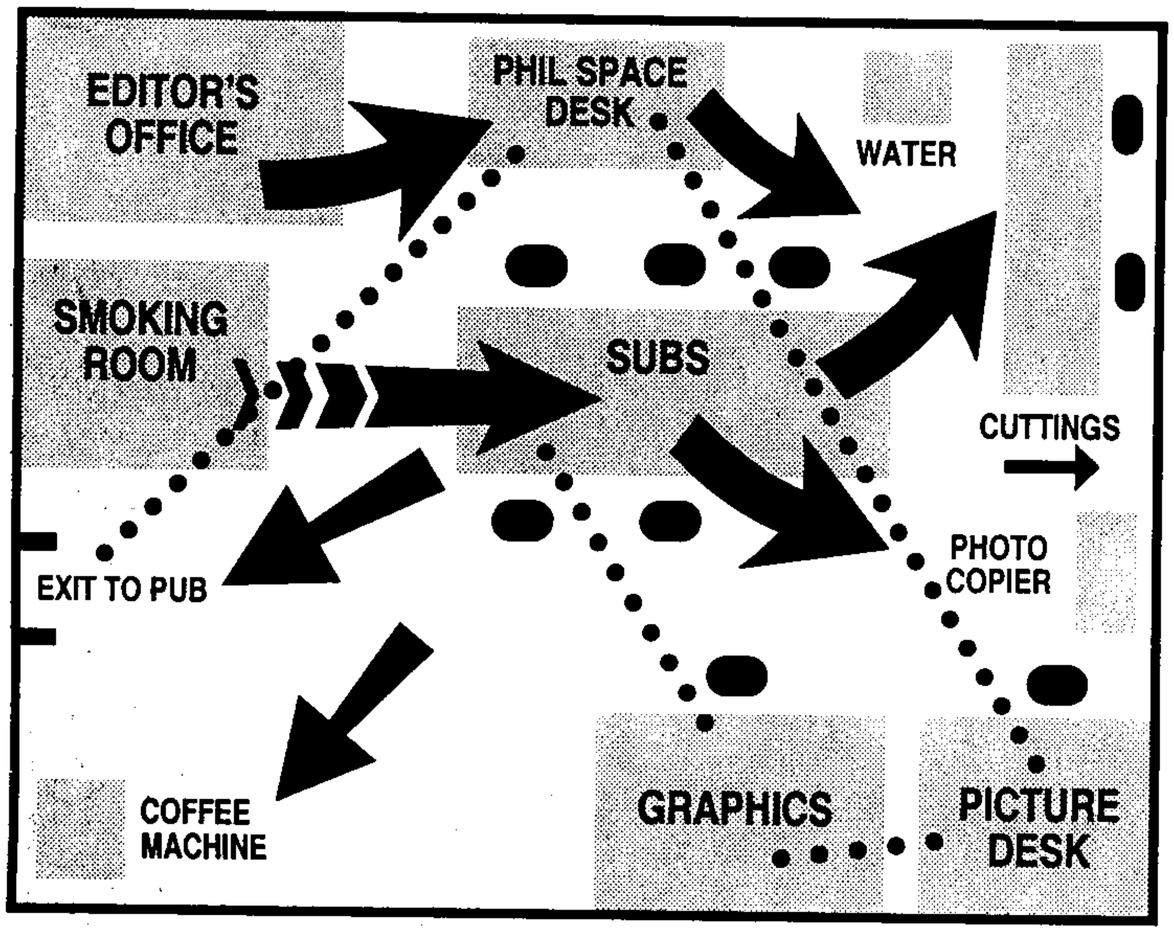
2.17 Hold rally with subs in pub. Agree strategy of big pictures and enormous graphics.

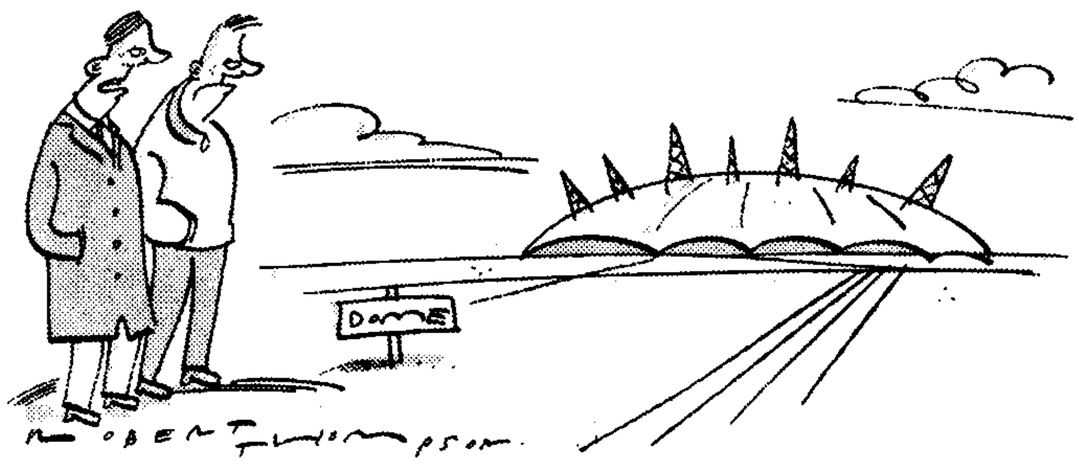
4.20 Abandon pub and launch all-out attack on key internet sites.

5.34 Seize downloaded article from Professor of Balkan studies at the University of Didcot (formerly the British School of Motoring).

6.17 Triumphantly hand in 10,000 words with headline "What a Load of Balkans".

THE GEOGRAPHY OF TERROR





"... and to think this place was once just a pile of rubbish"

TV Highlights

Wildlife

The Mating Habits of the Salmon (BBC)

DAVID Attenborough introduces fascinating footage showing the ex-head of BBC1, Mr Peter Salmon, leaping up the skirt *(Surely "stream"?)* of gorgeous, pouting Coronation Street barmaid Racquel in order to lay his actress *(Surely "eggs"?)*. Attenbore comments, "I have never seen anything like these scenes. Nothing like this would have happened when I was head of BBC2 back in the Sixties."

Soap Update

Eastenders (BBC1)

QUEEN VIC landlady Babs Windsor is heartbroken at hearing the news of Reggie's death. "He may have murdered people," she says, "but he never harmed anyone." Will she go to the funeral?

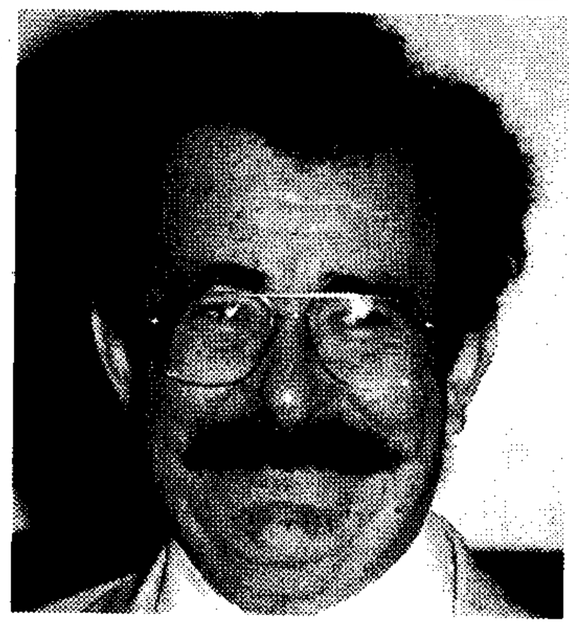
Comedy

One Foot In The Grave (BBC1)
How long will the BBC last? Long-running farce.

One Foot In The Gravy (BBC1)
Peter Salmon is being paid £300,000 to be Head of Sport. But wasn't he dumped from his job as Controller of BBC1 because the Channel was so bad? Laughs all round from the licence payer.

New from BBC Sport

11.45 Horizontal Jogging from White City
12.15 Second Leg(over) of the F.U. Cup
1.00 Bedroom Olympics live from Uganda



Science

The Human Body: The Miracle of the Moustache (BBC)

Few phenomena have baffled medical science as much as the growth of hair on the upper lip of Lord Winston.

What on earth is the point of it?

Tonight we go inside the moustache and watch the individual follicles emerging in high-speed stopframe motion to create a luxuriant growth underneath his nose.

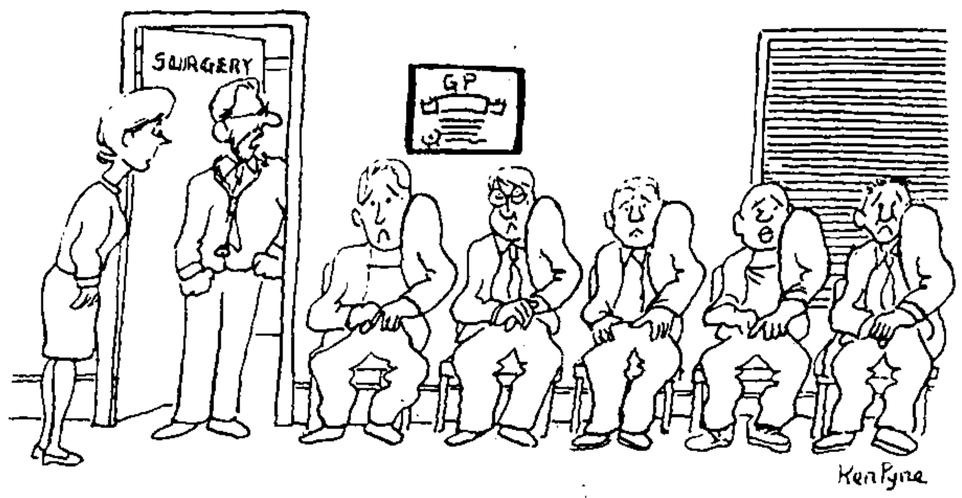
And finally we discover the secret purpose of the moustache.

To give everyone a good laugh on a Sunday night.

Lifestyle

Ground Phwoarce (BBC)
Charlie Dimmock tells us when is the best time of year to plant your seed – on location with her.

Changing Partners (BBC)
The BBC Changing Partners team go into other people's homes and totally rearrange their lives – sometimes the results are not to everyone's taste!



"Oh no! Not another bunch of mobile phone users!"

DIARY

ANTHEA TURNER

At the age of 37, I was one of the most successful women on British TV. Yes, I had mastered them all. Breakfast TV. Mid-Morning TV. Lunchtime TV. Afternoon TV. Early Evening TV. Evening TV. The lot.

I was cherished in every sitting-room throughout the land for my warm and sunny smile, to-die-for figure and radiant good looks. Yet inside, I was hurting.

There was one thing missing in my life.

More fame.

I was married to Pete, one of the country's top showbusiness managers. We shared a four-storey neo-Georgian mansion built to our own specifications in sought-after Twickenham, complete with six ensuite bedrooms, four reception rooms, a top-of-the-range electric hob and hot and cold running water.

But without a sixteen-page full-colour spread in Hello! magazine our marriage was a sham.

In the eyes of the world, I was the superstar pin-up who effortlessly managed to combine a bubbly outgoing personality with world-beating talent. In TV terms, I could do everything – beaming, talking, laughter to camera, looking left and right, the lot. I was so famous that I only had to issue a press release marked Urgent for every news desk in the land to know what was going on in my private life.

But inside, I was pining. I had been the subject of six-page spreads. Ten page spreads. But where was my sixteen page spread?

And why with my sunny disposition and girl-next-door personality wasn't I being asked to front BBC's prestige flagship programme, Newsnight?

Outside I was bubbly.

But inside I was hurting.

I suppose I first realised that our marriage was a sham when the news filtered through that Denise van Outen had been offered the BT corporate video instead of me.

One day I burst into floods of tears and began throwing our luxury 25-piece pure china crockery set from the exclusive Harrods department store in Pete's direction. Pete must have sensed something was wrong.

"There's something the matter, isn't there, Anth?" he said.

"Yes," I choked. Before I could stop myself my tears were splashing on the luxury pure satinwood table from top people's store Conran.

"It's our marriage, Pete," I sobbed. "The public's lost interest in it."

He reached out a hand. As my manager as well as my husband, he always had my best interests at heart.

"Let's prepare the press release," he said. "This could make a full page in the Mail."

Grant was ten years younger than Pete. His recently renovated nine-bedroom neo-Tudor house was set in 20 acres of luxurious Sussex countryside, equipped with indoor swimming-pool, whirlpool bath and double-fronted summer house with full barbecue facilities for entertaining business clients on warm summer evenings.

Grant and his sad wife Della seemed to enjoy all the trappings of a wealthy lifestyle. Two top-of-the-range off-road vehicles. Three daughters. Four horses. A fully integrated stereo system throughout the home. The lot. His pride and joy was the expensive hand-tufted prestige carpet in their main living-room, mown every Thursday by a member of his household staff.

"My corporate clients and business contacts assure me that mine is a lifestyle to envy, Anthea," he confessed to me one day. "But inside I'm pining."

"There's something the matter, isn't there?" I said.

"It's my sad wife Della," he choked, burying his head in my cleavage for comfort. "To me, she isn't nearly as famous as you. And let's face it, Anthea – she never will be."

From the second our lips met, I knew that I was lost. Grant gently undressed me, strewing my expensive clothes from some of London's top designers across his costly prestige carpet.

What happened in the hour that followed was a golden time that will stay with me for ever. I was euphoric that I was now in the hands of an experienced man who knew exactly how to please a woman. "Anthea, darling," he whispered, his naked body pressing to mine, "forget the press. Forget the cameras. Forget the TV. You've got to realise there's something much, much more to life than all that."

Grant took a deep breath, and looked me straight in the eyes. *"There's a book in this,"* he sighed.

Poor Della didn't know what had hit her. I genuinely felt for her. A former sad dental assistant, she sadly had no idea about anything. But Grant and I were determined to keep her from becoming any sadder, so we decided to maintain a low profile. We decided that the best place to do this was the Lord of the Dance Party at Wembley Arena, held in honour of top-earning dancer Michael Flatley. But hopes that we could pass unnoticed among the other guests – including fellow top TV celebrities Pauline Quirke and Dale Winton – proved misplaced.

The photographers flashbulbs blinded us. It was like Oscars night. With a shock, I realised I was now more famous than sad, tragic Princess Diana, former best-loved gran the Queen Mother, glamorous yet untouchable and sadly now dead Jackie Kennedy and bubbly former weathergirl Ulrika Jonsson into one.

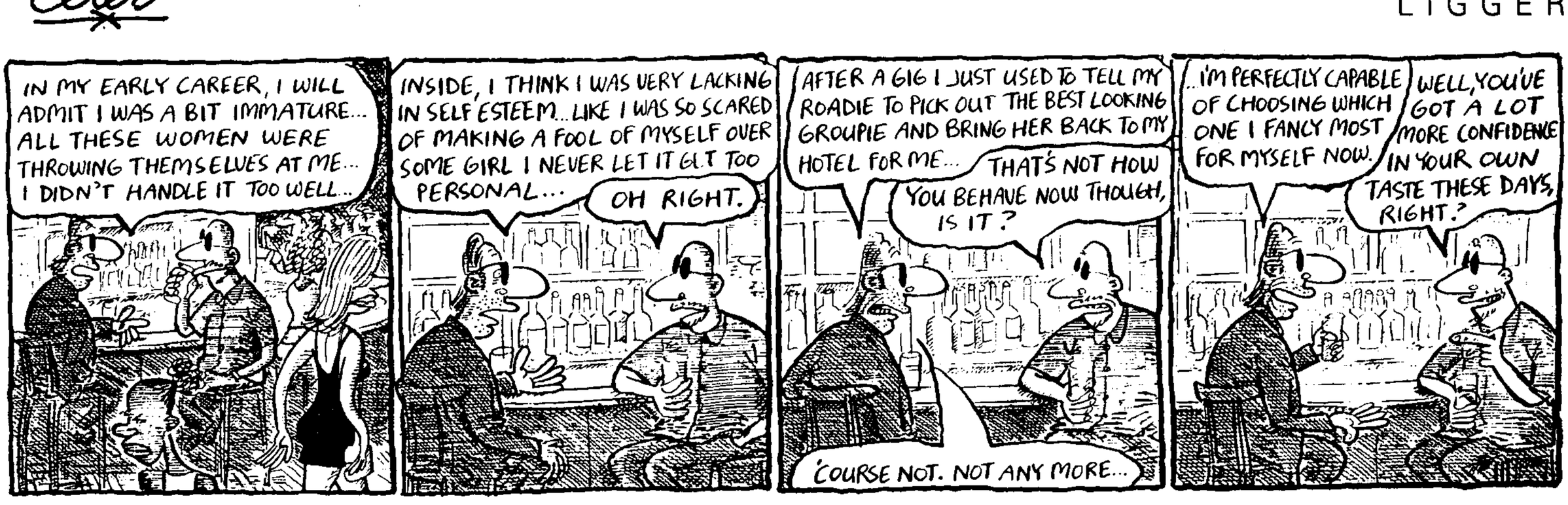
I had come through another harsh lesson in the price of life on Planet Fame.

Breaking up with Pete was probably the darkest fifteen seconds of my life, but somehow I got through it. Overshadowing everything was the intense public scrutiny to which Grant and I would be subjected if we left our partners. Our private lives would be held up for examination in every newspaper and magazine in the land. Grant's sad wife Della would be portrayed as an object of pity. Wherever we went we would be photographed. We would have no rest from the searing spotlight of the world media.

It was the chance of a lifetime.

As told to

CRAIG BROWN


IN MY EARLY CAREER, I WILL ADMIT I WAS A BIT IMMATURE... ALL THESE WOMEN WERE THROWING THEMSELVES AT ME... I DIDN'T HANDLE IT TOO WELL...
INSIDE, I THINK I WAS VERY LACKING IN SELF ESTEEM... LIKE I WAS SO SCARED OF MAKING A FOOL OF MYSELF OVER SOME GIRL I NEVER LET IT GET TOO PERSONAL...
OH RIGHT.
AFTER A GIG I JUST USED TO TELL MY ROADIE TO PICK OUT THE BEST LOOKING GROUPIE AND BRING HER BACK TO MY HOTEL FOR ME...
THAT'S NOT HOW YOU BEHAVE NOW THOUGH, IS IT?
'COURSE NOT. NOT ANY MORE...
...I'M PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF CHOOSING WHICH ONE I FANCY MOST FOR MYSELF NOW.
WELL, YOU'VE GOT A LOT MORE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR OWN TASTE THESE DAYS, RIGHT?

Literary Review

Sylvie Cringe

My World
David Beckham
(Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99)
Posh & Becks
Andrew Morton
(Michael O'Mara, £16.99)

IN THE years and decades to come, David Beckham may become a much-loved figure, possibly even a national treasure. "What skills! What artistry!" we shall say, wiping away a nostalgic tear. At the moment, though, he has some way to go. "What a prat! What a buffoon!" we cheer, wiping away tears of laughter. "What a silk-pantalooned, hen-pecked halfwit!" And now, against all the odds, what a published author, with a cast-iron bestseller on his hands.

My World, of course, is barely a book at all in the accepted sense, despite its hardback cover, numerous pages and a generous sprinkling of words. A naked, short-haired Beckham stares out from the front cover — just so you don't think it's about Paul Scholes — but well over half the book is taken up by photographs of the young master, in several of which he is actually wearing clothes.

The words, which fortuitously cease on page 94, are credited to "David Beckham assisted by Matt Dickinson and Rebecca Cripps". Two ghosts for such a threadbare narrative? One to do the football, perhaps, and one to do the home life with Victoria and little Bronx. But however they split their responsibilities, this book is "by" David Beckham in much the same way that *Swan* was "by" Naomi Campbell, ie somewhere between the very nearly and not quite.

And it's just as revealing as you'd expect. "All I ever wanted to do was kick a football about," he begins. As for Manchester United, "there was never any question of going to another club." If his parents hadn't been so supportive, "I might not have been ready to leave home at 16." He might even have rebelled, "although I wasn't that sort of person."

This is that most intriguing of literary constructs, the text shorn of all conceivable interest. "I didn't like being in the classroom much." Who would have guessed otherwise? It doesn't bother me one bit whether someone's gay or straight." Of course not. "Going out with a Spice Girl was a big deal." Really?

There are only two possible explanations. Either Beckham is such a wily media manipulator that he has decided to present himself as this slightly dull, soft-headed bloke who just happens to be half of the most famous couple in the UK, or that's what he really is.

After he first met Victoria, he wrote her phone number on six or seven Post-It notes so he wouldn't lose it. On the first date (*Jerry McGuire*) he tried to put his hand on her knee, then changed his mind as he didn't want to appear too forward. "It was love but it was also a case of feeling, I really fancy this girl, there's something happening here." He bought her a handbag. She bought him a massive bunny at Harrods.

You realise while reading this that, first, despite all the press coverage you know nothing about these people; then that there's nothing you want to know about them; and finally that there's nothing *to* know. (He gets on well with his in-laws. Scalextric was his favourite toy as a child.)

Does any of it matter? To Beckham, very probably. In the last chapter he explains that this is his attempt to set the record straight, to tell people what really happens in his life, however crucifyingly dull it may be. Whether or not people want to be told this is another thing. Many are likely to buy the book for the photographs, which should feed a few fantasies.

Of Andrew Morton's desperate effort, on the other hand, perhaps the least said the better. Shamelessness, sadly, is not a finite resource, which may be why Morton has been running around plugging this even though he never quite managed to talk to anyone who mattered.

Chapter One starts in typical Sylvie Krin style. "It was a scene of high drama and keen emotion as Victoria Beckham, her face streaked with tears, paced anxiously around the living room of her parents' house." But how does he know? Answer: he doesn't. So he has guessed. And in between the guesses, he interviews everyone who has a grudge against the pair and fills in the gaps with rehashed newspaper articles.

His shocking conclusion: Posh and Becks are "vain and self-absorbed". It's an astonishingly lame piece of work, whose cumulative effect is to make you feel quite well disposed towards its subjects and even more hostile towards its vain and self-absorbed author. Morton's next book, blowing the lid off the Teletubbies, is due next autumn.

BOOKS & BOOKERMEN

■ IT was a mark of the excitement aroused by this year's Booker shortlist that by the Saturday following its announcement Waterstone's flagship Piccadilly store had still only managed to display three of the six shortlisted novels.

As for the list itself, the extreme leanness of this year's homegrown fiction was evident long before Simon Jenkins' judging team (social historian Roy Porter; novelist Rose Tremain; *Sunday Times* lit ed Caroline Gascoigne; and, er, Mariella Frostrup) got their heads together.

Of the six, Margaret Attwood (*The Blind Assassin*), having been listed three times before, is automatically the bookies' favourite, ahead of Kazuo Ishiguru, whose *When We Were Orphans* is nowhere near as good as his 1989 winner *The Remains Of The Day*.

Matthew Kneale's *English Passengers* is a stout historical effort and could be in with a shout, while Trezza Azzopardi's account of a Maltese-expatriate childhood in Cardiff (*The Hiding Place*) reposes in the timeworn category of "promising first novel". No one knows anything about the two US-resident Irishmen Michael Collins (*The Keepers of Truth*) and Brian O'Doherty (*The Deposition of Father McGreevy*).

In Collins' case this ignorance extends to senior staff at his publisher, Orion, who were apparently startled to receive congratulations on having produced a Booker contender after all these years. Book trade gossip hints at a prolonged stand-off between the "literary" end of the judging panel (Porter, Tremain and Gascoigne) and the middlebrow tastes championed by Jenkins and la Brastrap. The smart money remains on Attwood, but oh dear me, what a yawn!

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ FORMER defence minister Peter Kilfoyle launched his book *Left Behind: Lessons From Labour's Heartland* to a fanfare of yawns on Merseyside last week.

True, the Jimmy Tarbuck look-and soundalike MP for Liverpool Walton has managed to upset a few people locally. These include relatives of the late Robert Parry MP: Kilfoyle reveals that Parry was once disgustingly drunk at a meeting with former "minister for fun" David Mellor.

There is also an amusing reference to prominent Liverpool solicitor Rex Makin, whom Kilfoyle claims is known locally as "Gollum" after the odious character in Tolkein's *Lord of the Rings*. But most scousers appear to agree with Derek "Degsy" Hatton, who features prominently, that the only real damage Kilfoyle could do with his book would be to throw it at someone.

Certainly one *Eye* reader who turned up at Liverpool Waterstone's at 2.30 on Monday last week for a signing session by Kilfoyle billed for 2pm to 3pm found the author had already left, leaving a pile of signed copies but not many customers. Waterstone's was already selling the book at £3 off the full £17.99 price — coming soon to a remainder shop near you!

■ FOLLOWING disastrous attendances at The Word — The London Festival of Literature — last month, its director Peter Florence told David Sexton in the *Evening Stonedead* last Friday that "we've learned what works and what doesn't work".

Sound familiar? At the start of September, *Publishing News* reported that "Florence believes that he has learned some valuable lessons" from the first loss-making festival in March 1999. "There were four or five things strategically wrong with the Festival last year," he admitted.

So, how many more balls-ups will the golden boy of Hay-on-Wye be allowed by companies like next year's sponsors Orange before all concerned have to admit that what works in Gloucestershire is unnecessary in a city already groaning

O·B·N

Salman's genius

Salman Rushdie is a genius, no matter on which side of the Atlantic he dines. The quote attributed to me in your paper (Review, last week) appeared to imply that I thought otherwise. Not so.

FAY WELDON
Observer

£10 paid for entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

with literary events?

Mind you, it wasn't all doom and gloom. According to Florence, successes included a sell-out event with novelist Margaret Atwood. What he omits to mention is that the Atwood gig was organised independently by Silver Moon, the specialist women's bookshop in Charing Cross Road, and that it took place two days after the festival.

■ A THEORY concerning Dorling Kindersley's takeover by Pearson is emerging among former employees of the company's now-defunct Family Learning division (see *Eye* 1007).

Although the infamous 10 million copy *Star Wars* print run — as ordered by erstwhile chief executive James Middlehurst, a man rumoured to have communicated with his colleagues entirely on yellow Post-It notes — was certainly far more than could ever have been sold last Christmas, an FL adviser has revealed to the *Eye* that distribution problems meant that they could not acquire enough copies to meet the demand that did exist. The advisers had also been told by a member of WH Smith staff that the high street chain had experienced significant supply problems with the *Star Wars* books.

The blame in both cases was laid firmly at the door of DK's distributor IBD, which was purchased last year by, er, Pearson. If, as has long been suggested, Pearson wanted to buy DK, there could have been no surer way to bring the company to its knees and make it vulnerable to takeover at a knockdown price than to ensure that the company was unable to shift its vast *Star Wars* stocks.

The ex-employees are now hoping to persuade the Department of Timidity and Inaction to investigate Pearson's conduct and check that no sinister machinations occurred.

■ THE best laid plans of Waterstone's to ensure the arrival of plentiful stock for the pre-

Christmas rush seem to be going rather agley.

In the great Christmas meltdown of 1998, when things went seriously wrong at two of the major distributors — the Random House-owned TBS, which was having problems bedding in its new site, and Orion's LBS, which was served notice at one of its sites and had to rehouse all the stock while keeping up with massive demand — it was wholesalers like Bertrams and Gardners who saved the day and kept the bookshops supplied.

For this Christmas Waterstone's thought it would be really clever and transferred all its business for key titles to Bertrams, instead of dealing direct with publishers. Now, however, shop managers are losing patience with the once-impeccable wholesaler as it is "struggling to ship new titles to the chain".

Apparently it occurred to no one that history might repeat itself as Bertrams suddenly had to expand to cope with a massive increase in trade brought by the Waterstone's contract.

■ JASPER GRIEGSON, author of *The Complete Complainer*, has recently been devoting his regular column in the *Daily Getsworse* to advice on how to get the most out of the small claims court. Ironically enough, some of Griegson's most grateful readers are likely to include the poor unfortunates who are waiting for money from his publisher Metro. In recent months, both former chairman Ian Savage and ex-sales manager Les Phipps have had to resort to the self-same small claims court to extract long-overdue pay cheques from the cash-strapped publisher, while numerous printers and suppliers wait forlornly for their bills to be settled. Meanwhile, Metro md Susanne McDadd has decided to go for one last throw of the dice and order a 30,000-copy print run for Glenda Lee-Potter's *Class Act*, a book which she has been declaring privately to be the company's "saviour". Unfortunately, her faith is not shared by the bookshop chains: advance orders having been significantly less than a third of the number of copies printed.

'Bookworm'

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

■ The London Symphony Orchestra's residency at the Barbican Centre involves coexistence with the Barbican's theatre and cinemas, corporate junketing and ethnic foyer entertainments. To date this has been fairly cordial, but life is getting crowded.

There was an embarrassing incident at the opening of the LSO's new season: a big night, with a party in the interval to which the capital's cultural elite had all been invited. The magisterial Sir Colin Davis was conducting and the whole thing was being recorded for broadcast by the BBC and the LSO's new in-house CD label. Shame, then, that during a quiet bit in Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique the tannoy in the foyer could be heard summoning theatregoers back for the second half of The Secret Fall of Constance Wilde nextdoor.

There was nothing secret about the fury in Davis's face as the tannoy ran on, at increasing volume, to the point where he had to drop his baton and stop the performance. The audience gasped because things like this don't happen often. Worse still, they then laughed when a hatch in the back wall of a platform opened and, cuckoo-like, an oboe player's head popped out wondering why his cue for an offstage solo hadn't come.

After the performance the legendary conciliating skills of Barbican MD John Tusa were said to be in overdrive... good practice for when (as insiders predict, against Tusa's insistence) he goes to run the Royal Opera House.

● THE saintly Sir John Tavener is normally associated with serene, spiritually enhancing music, his hands clasped tight in prayer. But his hands occasionally clasp a stiff drink too, it seems.

He certainly wasn't very serene at the South Bank recently where he was giving a talk as part of a festival called Ikons of Light: The Inspirations of John Tavener.

After ranting incoherently about the "malignant tumour" of the Catholic church (he's Greek Orthodox) and the "filthy mess" of modern music, he reduced his interviewer to stunned silence by complaining: "It's a mark of what society has come to that you can't have a joke with a black man and call him a nig-nog any more." Reports that St John had been deep in prayerful reflection at the Festival Hall bar shortly before his talk were unconfirmed but widespread.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

The first week I was there [Oxford University] I remember meeting an Etonian with an English scholarship who had never heard of Sacheverell Sitwell; at my comprehensive, that was the sort of thing we talked about all the time.

PHILIP HENSHER
Independent

Pseuds Corner

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Shaun Hammond & David James — Social Studies: An Exploratory Study into the Use of and Attitude towards Mobile Phones

This study attempts to explore how mobile phones are used and their roles as actors and objects within social interactions. This will be achieved through a small-scale time-use and attitude survey focusing on user-mobile phone interactions. Specific interest will be focused on frequency and types of use and their function within interactions. This study will apply actor network theory to an understanding of mobile phone use; this will allow an exploration of the role of the mobile phone as an active object in human networks.

Suffolk College research colloquium abstracts

My first job as fashion editor at i-D magazine meant I went out every night to clubs with a photographer to interview people about their clothes. I thought I was irreverent but those clubbers taught me the meaning of visual anarchy. Once I wore a swimsuit with Dr Marten boots, a towel on my head and a jacket. Another time I strung cola cans together as a belt. Ironically, while I was at i-D I was refused entry to a Vivienne Westwood show inParis because I looked too way out.

CARYN FRANKLIN
Eve

CONTRIBUTORS: A. Lumnus, Neville Ward, Anon, Geoff Poole, Lois Stock, Caroline Franklyn.

£10 paid for entries

I ask all of you who come to this Festival *[Ikons of Light: The Inspirations of John Tavener]* to accept it as a poor man's mite given to you all, along with all the "voices" divine and human that have summoned me.

JOHN TAVENER
Royal Festival Hall press release

19. Tobias Collier, *"Antigram"*, collage 2000

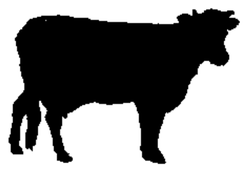
Art paradigms exist as emergent nodal points, mapping an expansive landscape of reference, subject to the universal power of viral replicators. The insubstantial, frequently ambiguous and increasingly deterritorialised nature of contemporary fine art practice, coupled with the drive to radicalism and expectation of privatisation in the individual of a generation whose synapses are already stimulated by a lifetime of ultra-exposure creates a climate of perceived incontinuity.

The desire to achieve resolution of this conative dissonance in the autopoietic system that is "self", induced by the accelerated horizontal transmission of memetic replicators from the rhizomatic field of experience to the "selfplex memepool" is what gives rises to further mutations. This will in itself force the production of a succession of increasingly virile replicators, more able to fulfil the requirements of precise, multiple and durable infections. Ultimately a positive feedback loop is in place that, in its attempts to homogenise existence, finds itself with an increased obligation to the position of active ambivilance *(sic)* or becoming.

"Tunnelvision" installation at Aldwych tube station

IN THE BACK

BSE INQUIRY



IF YOU WANT TO GET AHEAD, GET A HAT (OR THREE)

DR RICHARD Kimberlain loves science. He told the BSE inquiry that science was rather like sex – he enjoyed it most when it worked. This love of science was one of the reasons he set up his influential consultancy on animal disease.

Dr Kimberlin featured prominently in the recent Channel Four documentary on BSE, Beef Encounter (script edited from the inquiry hearings by Dennis Woolf). The programme traced his early career as a humble government scientist. He was for a time acting director of the Neuropathogenesis Unit (NPU) at Edinburgh. In 1988, as the BSE crisis broke, he left the government service and set up a private consultancy called SARDAS.

His expertise on BSE made the new consultant very much in demand. "I just found that people were phoning me and asking me to do things for them," he told the inquiry.

In 1990 he joined SEAC, the government's advisory committee on spongiform encephalopathy. It was not until October 1994 that the commercial interests of SEAC members were disclosed to the House of Commons by the then agriculture minister Angela Browning. Dr Kimberlin, she revealed, was an adviser to the UN; to various national governments; to the World Health Organisation; to the "petfood industry worldwide"; and to "the pharmaceutical industry worldwide".

More relevantly he was a consultant to the Meat and Livestock Commission. Thus at least by 1994, while the BSE crisis raged, he was a member of the government's advisory committee on BSE and at the same time a consultant to three industries closely connected with the BSE controversy — the pharmaceutical industry (which, as *Eye* readers will recall, supplied vaccines made with bovine material); the petfood industry and the meat industry.

He served all three diligently. He warned his rich client Pedigree Masterfoods of a possible BSE threat in pet food. The inquiry chairman, Lord Phillips, asked him: "Did you advise any members of the pet food industry that they ought to exclude any items which they were incorporating in their pet food because of the risk?"

He replied: "Yes." In answer to another question from another member of the inquiry team, Dr Kimberlin mused: "It was extraordinary the way the pet food industry approached me before the human food industry." The Channel Four programme observed that there was a "six months gap between Pedigree Masterfoods [Kimberlin's client] deciding to ban SBOs [specified bovine offals] for dogs and cats and the government actually taking them out of the human food chain".

Dr Kimberlin explained in evidence: "In those days the whole BSE operation in MAFF was like two men and a dog. It was incredibly small numbers of people actually involved in this." The effort to protect cats and dogs from BSE was far more strenuous than the effort to protect humans. By 1993, however, the ministry of agriculture had got the message and concluded that it was time to hire a consultant. Who better than Dr Richard Kimberlin?

On 24 May 1993 three senior scientists at the government's central veterinary laboratory wrote a memo to their boss, Mr T.W.A. Little. "It would be useful," they advised, "to employ the services of Richard Kimberlin on a formal basis. He would make an invaluable contribution..." His consultancy, they suggested, "should be financed from the BSE research and development budget".

Mr Little was delighted and scrawled on the memo: "I am in full agreement with your proposal. It will be very useful to have Richard as a strong ally during this next period."

A MAFF spokeswoman told the *Eye*: "Dr Kimberlin was an ad hoc consultant to the ministry on a number of matters before and after May 1993." Asked whether the 1993 scientists' memo to Mr Little led to any change in the terms of Dr Kimberlin's consultancy, the spokeswoman would not reply. Nor could she help at all with the amount of taxpayers' money paid in consultancy fees to Dr Kimberlin. She said that was a "private matter".

Dr Kimberlin gave evidence three times to the Phillips inquiry. His final session there last December dealt at some length with possible conflicts of interest that might have arisen as a result of his numerous consultancies. He was from 1990 a member of SEAC, but he treated SEAC, he said, "as I would treat any client". One rather obvious difference between SEAC and his other clients, however, was that SEAC did not pay him any more than his expenses.

Lord Phillips

Somehow Dr Kimberlin got through three days of evidence without anyone asking him how much he was paid by his other clients — especially the meat industry, the pharmaceutical industry and the government. Colin Maclean, a senior official at the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC), told the inquiry that Dr Kimberlin had been paid as a consultant from 1993.

Maclean and Kimberlin worked very closely together through the BSE crisis of the mid-1990s. In December 1995, several scientists' public concerns about BSE began to rattle the commission. An internal memo from another senior MLC official, Colin Smith, suggested: "We need a panel of `on-side' experts to whom we can direct the media for comments and quotes... Names which come immediately to mind are the SEAC members. It would also help to have a retired consultant but could prove a problem if they go wobbly!"

Asked about this at the inquiry, Dr Kimberlin agreed at once that the Meat and Livestock Commission was "increasingly feeling a little bit frustrated from not being able to have readily available competent scientists on whom they could draw for expert opinion. They were using me all the time for briefings particularly to the industry."

A few days later, on 8 December 1995, Colin Maclean wrote to Dr Kimberlin advising him of a meeting to be held the following week with the meat industry and the supermarkets. "The objective of the meeting," he explained, "is to bring them all up to date on the simple facts on this issue, ensure that they all agree and `sing from the same hymn sheet'."

The following exchange then took place between counsel to the inquiry and Dr Kimberlin:

Q: This request, that you attend a meeting with industry organisations and another with representatives of the multiple retailers, was this the sort of thing which was a normal part of your consultancy arrangement with the Meat and Livestock Commission?

A: Yes.

Colin Maclean and the MLC were after rather more, as became clear from further letters to their paid consultant, Dr Kimberlin. On 3 January 1996, Maclean wrote again with a list of questions the ministry of agriculture intended to put to SEAC. The questions were mainly about a fatal new illness called new variant CJD, which some people were suggesting had links to BSE and therefore to meat.

Mr Maclean wrote: "We agree that we need succinct answers to these questions and my colleagues in our PR company Richmond Towers have drafted the sort of answers they would like to see... This should give you some feel for what we would initially like before you face the questions. Anything you can do to help get crisp answers would be a big help. An ideal way forward would be for SEAC members to write a letter saying they had not changed their eating habits." Counsel asked:

Q: Dr Kimberlin, was consideration of this letter and what was set out by Mr Maclean part of your consultancy for the MLC?

A: I do not know that it is part of my consultancy with the MLC. It is just something that happened.

Q: Did it cross your mind whether it would be right to reply: "I am sorry Mr Maclean, helping you to get crisp answers from SEAC is not an appropriate job for me?"

A: No, it did not cross my mind to do that because it would have been entirely unnecessary.

When the questions finally came in to SEAC, Dr Kimberlin replied to them in very similar terms to those suggested by the MLC. He was, he explained, working for SEAC not the MLC. "I had to change hats at this stage, I cannot spend my life explaining to people that I have changed my hats."

This was clearly too much for the chairman of the inquiry, Lord Phillips, who asked:

Q: Can I suggest you might have said: "Answers A C D were answers MLC said they would like to see because it would assist them in their campaign. It seems to me it is entirely accurate and a good way of putting it so I put them forward on that basis?"

A: Lord Phillips, what is the point?

Q: One point is appearances. There is a danger, is there not, that if you are in a situation of conflict of interest if you do not disclose precisely what the position is, then things may later look bad.

A: That could be said of many situations, frankly.

The comforting answers from SEAC that January (that the CJD crisis had no relevance to British beef, which was perfectly safe to eat) did not last very long. A few weeks later, in March 1996, health secretary Stephen Dorrell told the House of Commons that there was after all a link between BSE and new variant CJD, and in the four years since no one has discovered what the link is or how to deal with it. CJD deaths are mounting by the month.

There was another relevant development in 1996. Dr Richard Kimberlin was awarded he OBE for services to animal health.

Sulley with the fringe on top

A BRILLIANT idea inspired John Sulley (left), a former energy trading manager at privatised Scottish Power. He reckoned that if he could convert consumers of electricity by bribing them with lower charges, he could make a fortune.

Naturally he needed his own company, Independent Energy, for this purpose. Investors enthused about Sulley's idea and his new company, and Independent Energy became "market favourite" for 1999. The share price soared to more than £3.50.

Mr Sulley was so delighted that earlier this year he sold a large block of his shares for £1.8m. But sadly neither he nor anyone else in his company could find an efficient way of billing its customers. Independent Energy went into steep decline and never recovered. Receivers have been called in and gullible investors in the US are threatening so sue. Moreover, 242,000 conned customers, threatened with power cuts, have had to be rescued by the regulator. Mr Sulley, however, had rescued himself.

BROTHERS IN ARMS?

THE dual announcement that the fabulously rich and influential London-based Hinduja brothers want to buy Express newspapers and have been charged in India with receiving kickbacks from the Swedish arms firm Bofors must have come as a a shock to the brothers' well-oiled public relations machine.

Srichand Hinduja

The machine has been helped by the close relationships fostered over the years between the brothers, the Tory party and all sorts of important people, including the former British prime ministers Margaret Thatcher and John Major.

Two Indian publications which resisted this pressure were *The Hindu* and *The Nation*. On 24 June 1988, *The Hindu* published a series of documents under the heading *THE BOFORS-HINDUJA CONNECTION*. They showed that in the years before the billion-dollar gun contract between Bofors and the Indian government was sealed in 1986, two substantial payments were made by Bofors. The payments were made to Pitco. One of the documents indicated that the money went to Pitco c/o Sangam. Sangam is a Hinduja company based in London.

The brothers continued to deny any connection with the Bofors contract, but on 22 January 1990, Mr R.M. Singh, superintendent of police in New Delhi, published a 66-page report on the Bofors allegations. He revealed: "There are documents and circumstances available to indicate that Pitco is connected with G.P. Hinduja and Sangam Ltd of New Zealand House, Haymarket, London." There was at least one other document available to the Indian police which established that Bofors had an agreement to pay Pitco money in connection with the gun contract.

The details of the payments were available only in Switzerland, where the authorities assiduously protect the anonymity of account holders. The Indian government and police applied to the Swiss authorities for detailed information about the beneficiaries of the Pitco account. Various appeals were launched against the disclosure of the beneficiaries. Among the appellants were the Hinduja brothers, who explained in a press release in 1994 that they had been "compelled" to appeal to protect the commercial confidentiality of information not connected to the arms deal. The appeals wound their tortuous way through the Swiss legal system.

All this was set out in *Eye* 963, on 13 November 1998 under the heading A NOBEL CAUSE (Bofors was at that time a subsidiary of Nobel, the Swedish conglomerate whose name is given to the renowned international peace prizes). It was not until June this year that the Indian authorities finally got the information they wanted.

On 28 September the Hindujas circulated a statement to the effect that the investigating judge in Switzerland had responded to the demands of the Indian police. "We sincerely believe," said the statement, "that the further evidence will enable the police to reach the conclusion of our non-involvement in the Bofors case." A further statement on 9 October announced that the brothers were "extremely surprised" that the Indian authorities had so precipitously decided to prefer charges against them.

The first announcement of their innocence was enough to scare off the *Sunday Times*, which had prepared a full page article on the Hindujas and the Bofors deal. The decision to pull the article was on legal advice and had nothing whatever to do with the legendary influence the Hindujas have over Rupert Murdoch, proprietor of the *Sunday Times*.

PS: A prominent international company owned by the Hindujas is the Gulf Oil Trading Company — described on the Hindujas' fax machines as GOTCO. Anyone struck by the similarity between GOTCO and PITCO should know that the Hindujas' father, who set up the business, was called Parmanand, and an intriguing abbreviation of Parmanand International Trading Company would be PITCO.

PPS: The Hindujas are not sectarian about their Tory politics. Much to the relief of "new" Labour, the brothers were generous benefactors of that great British institution, the dome. The brothers' rather sudden conversion to the greatness of Britain and its institutions may be related to their recent surrender of Indian nationality and their application to become British citizens. Their new status as foreign nationals may make any extradition proceedings in India rather more complicated and lengthy.

Chaucer's tales

FOUR months after prison governor Eoin McLellan-Murray was removed under a cloud of suspicion as head of Blantyre jail in Kent (and as the rest of Fleet Street finally catches up with the *Eye*'s coverage of the story), Mr McLellan-Murray has at last learnt why.

Though no money went astray at Blantyre, then the country's most successful "model" jail, Mr McLellan-Murray is to face a disciplinary charge relating to sloppy book-keeping in Blantyre's charity account.

This account holds funds raised by inmates in support of Mencap and other good causes. The charge relates to the purchase of gas cylinders, electric cable and a wheelchair for a severely disabled child. There is no question of missing funds or that the items were not bought and passed on to the charities involved. They were simply not receipted properly.

McLellan-Murray was not directly responsible for keeping the charity books of course, but as governor he apparently has a "sub accounting" or checking role — not perhaps top priority for a man responsible for the safe and smooth running of a multimillion pound resettlement jail.

Following the botched raid on Blantyre in May, the so-called Chaucer team responsible for the investigation at the jail has completed its 60-page report. It would not bear forensic scrutiny. It refers to serious incidents at the jail six years ago — two years before McLellan-Murray even took over. One of those involved a prisoner on day release crashing his car and killing a woman and seriously injuring a child. The governor at the time was one Brian Pollett — a co-author of the Chaucer report.

The report says that, although no serious incident has since been uncovered, "we are sure it is likely that there have been ones of which we are not aware".

If that's the best the prison service has to level at the governor after an unprecedented night raid and four-month trawl through the entire jail, McLellan-Murray surely has a good case before an industrial tribunal. Perhaps the Commons home affairs select committee will come to the same conclusion when its members quiz prison services head Martin Narey this week.

The telecon industry?

ONE of the government's new flagship "partnership" NTOs (national training organisations) is in danger of going bust amid allegations of mishandling millions of pounds of European union money.

For the past eight months the special investigations unit of the department for education and employment (DfEE) has been looking into allegations of "irregularity and impropriety" in the handling of up to £11m of European social fund (ESF) money by nto.telecom.

NTOs are descended from the old industrial training boards and nto.telecom, funded by industry and government, provides training and qualifications for the telecommunications industry.

At the heart of the investigation is roughly £9m that was passed from Europe via nto.telecom to a training company, Global Business Dimensions (GBD), which has gone bust. Though alarm bells about contracts with Global first sounded in 1998 when a consultant said that any audit by the government "would reveal severe inadequacies in the control and documentation of these contracts", European taxpayers' money continued to pour into Global right up until last May.

Now, it seems, much of it cannot be accounted for. GBD's record keeping apparently amounted to little more than hand-written messages or notes stored on an individual's lap-top. This begs serious questions about who at nto.telecom was authorising deals with Global and who at the DfEE was giving government approval.

Ian Lorimer, nto.telecom's chief executive, resigned over the affair in May. But his may not be the last head to roll. As the investigation continues, the DfEE is sufficiently concerned to have asked nto.telecom for repayment of the money – a debt which could send it into insolvency or render it liable to a charge of trading while disqualified.

Nto.telecom spokeswoman Fiona Marchant said the company did not want to comment, but the debacle could scupper its plans to dig itself out of a hole by merging with EMTA, the engineering and marine training organisation.

POLICE 5

THERE appears to be one law for the general public and another for the police when it comes to investigating even serious allegations of child sexual abuse.

A complaint has been lodged with the chief constable of Suffolk alleging at worst a "cover-up" on the part of investigating officers and at best incompetence in their handling of the case of a fellow policeman suspected of abusing his daughter.

The child was placed on the local authority at risk register after a paediatrician referred the case to the police. However, when the father was subsequently interviewed by colleagues, officers decided he gave "plausible replies" and he was released without charge.

Lawyers acting for the child's mother have now lodged a catalogue of complaints about the way the case was handled. These include the claims that:

- the investigating officer was based at the same station as the father and knew him personally;
- the officer had indicated she was the only one from the team willing to investigate the matter, and that she later admitted it might affect her career if she continued to investigate a colleague;
- the child's interviews were not videotaped in accordance with good practice guidelines;
- the mother — a potential witness — was present at the interview and therefore investigators ran the risk of contaminating the evidence;
- there was a four-day delay between disclosures by the child and the arrest of their father;
- the arrest and interview were carried out by another officer who knew the father;
- even "plausible replies" should be referred to the crown prosecution service (CPS) for independent consideration — especially when the accused is a serving police officer.
- the case was not referred to the police complaints unit, even though serious allegations of a criminal offence by serving police should trigger an automatic referral.

Last week, however, Suffolk constabulary said that in the light of earlier correspondence from the mother, the force's head of crime management together with the CPS had reviewed the actions taken and it had been found that the investigation was professional, complied with police and child protection policies and that there was insufficient evidence to charge the father or anyone else. Because officers had complied with the policies and procedures of Suffolk, they "should not be the subject of a misconduct investigation".

But the solicitor for the mother, who is now considering a judicial review of the decision not to record the complaint, said that the response was "extremely worrying".

You can contact Paul Foot on 020 7287 3183 or the In the Back team on 020 7437 4017

In the City

Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

THAT judgement of the historian Lord Acton almost a century ago has been the epitaph of many experts in corporate excess. Former Tomkins dictator Greg Hutchings is but the latest recipient in a long line of greedy grey suits. For 15 years he dominated the guns to cakes conglomerate as chairman and chief executive. A court of well-paid yes-men accepted the Hutchings dogma: My Way or the highway.

Shareholders now know, and Tomkins directors claim to have only just found out, that Greg's way included a private squadron of executive jets; not one but two luxury London apartments for his personal overnight use; a wife (a short Rolls Royce ride away in Surrey) and housekeeper on the payroll; bankrolling a close female friend's charity, as well as his hockey club, plus near neighbour Lord Archer's doomed mayoral campaign – not to mention company paid-for overseas family trips and luxury Caribbean breaks. And that's just for starters.

Chances are further and wider abuse of company funds will emerge to guarantee increasing interest, if not investigation, by the Inland Revenue, the Department of Timidity & Inaction and possibly the police if it is discovered that there may have been unauthorised spending (potentially theft) or false accounting (untrue documentation).

Tomkins' new class of 99 chairman David Newlands appears to accept that he knew nothing of all this but that others inside the company did, which is how it leaked out. Hutchings claims – and as yet Newlands does not appear to dispute – that all of the former dictator's abuses of company funds and assets were authorised and/or legitimate and/or disclosed both internally and to the taxman. But if Newlands did not know, who did? What did they know? When did they know it? And whom did they tell?

These are questions no doubt being pursued as part of an internal if not exactly independent investigation by Tomkins' auditor, Arthur Andersen. But given that the same Arthur Andersen has been in place during Hutchings' regime of abuse, it too has some serious questions to answer about its knowledge and silence. How was it possible – if the auditors knew – for them not to disclose in the annual report, as almost certainly required by company law, that Mrs Caroline Hutchings was from the 1980s until recently paid up to £30,000 a year and that the Hutchings housekeeper was also on the payroll?

If all his company perks were disclosed on Hutchings' P11D return by Tomkins to the Inland Revenue, why were none of the flights, use of apartments, support of Richmond hockey club similarly worthy of mention to shareholders in these days of supposed full disclosure and corporate governance?

But if Andersen did not know, was this because the abuses were covered up or was the firm lied to, and if so by whom within Tomkins? But if Andersen did know, then why did it say nothing? Did the auditors accept explanations and non-disclosure which a more inquisitive approach could and should have rejected?

Considerable doubt must be raised about Andersen's ability to carry out a truly independent investigation in these circumstances given that it must have to investigate its own actions to some extent.

Audit work is seen by the big accountancy firms as a loss leader borne in order to have the inside track to more remunerative work such as consultancy and tax planning from the client. Auditors tend to see the management's point of view if the alternative is to object and lose the audit work and all that goes with it.

Whether Andersen made similar errors of judgement or was a victim of deceit by directors remains to be seen, but these are hardly questions that the firm can answer convincingly about itself.

What is undoubted is that Greg Hutchings was a very important client to Andersen. Over the past four years alone Tomkins paid Andersen more than £30m in fees – £12.8m last year alone. Only £14m was for audit work – that fee has grown from £3.3m to £3.7m a year. The majority was for tax and other advice, including a whopping £9.1m last year of which £6.8m related to the disposal of the RHM food business.

Unfairly, cynics might say those sort of fees buy a lot of understanding, compliant interpretation and silence. Pity the Andersen partner who had to explain the loss of such fees. Lest we forget the self-same Arthur Andersen, the Labour government's favourite firm, kept silent while car-making conman John De Lorean robbed and mislead the British government – actions which cost the firm multi-millions in compensation to HMG and other creditors.

Andersen can and no doubt will say that it relied on the directors as it is entitled to do. But did it ever ask for and receive a letter of representation regarding the company's approval of all or any of the perks to protect itself from future criticism – and if so when and why? Directors are legally responsible for the accounts; but shareholders could respond that auditors are also paid to check on directors' veracity and £3.7m should buy enough checking to find the planes and flats, not to mention Caroline Hutchings.

Certain Tomkins directors also have a lot to answer for. The board was always stuffed with Hutchings' cronies and fans. That they said nothing until the jet was out of the hangar is no surprise. Tomkins paid well. Benefits in kind totalled £129,000 for the six executives last year. Even non-executives, the supposed watchdogs, received £23,000 a year.

Company secretary Richard Marchant has been there since before Hutchings arrived in 1983. He is also administration director. Marchant received £43,000 in benefits last year, only £2,000 less than Hutchings. The company secretary is a key figure in handling legal compliance and liaising with the auditors. It is difficult to believe Marchant knew nothing of the Tomkins Air Force, the flats, cheques to charity and Archer, Mrs Hutchings and the housekeeper. Yet he is part of the internal investigation!

Former Tomkins managing director, finance, Ian Duncan was with Hutchings from 1984 until July last year when he left with £650,000 after a reputed row. His wife, it emerges, was also put on the payroll with Mrs Hutchings by a former chairman to make up for having to attend corporate functions!

Duncan helped Andersen prepare the accounts. Duncan must have had a role in approving the purchase of the four jets and the two Belgravia and Thames-side apartments. Under Duncan and successor Ken Lever, who worked on the latest accounts, would have been a chief accountant and other bean counters responsible for signing cheques, paying bills and filling in P11Ds. Were concerns ever raised by junior bean counters? If so with whom and with what result other than carry on signing?

Executive directors Anthony Reading and David Snowdon have been Hutchings' well-paid colleagues since 1992 and 1996. What did they know about their boss's perks? Whatever it was they publicly did nothing.

Hutchings ensured his handpicked board was dominated by executives – contrary to City best practice – and even the minority of non-executives were chums. In 1998 there were four non-executives of which one (Robert Muddimer) was a former executive director; one (Charles Gates) was paid $250,000 a year as a consultant; and two (Lazards banker Ali Wambold and Roger Holland) were pals! These are independent watchdogs? Muddimer and Gates have since gone. Wambold, who until last year headed both the audit and remuneration committees, and Holland should both follow pal Greg out the door.

As ever when a captain of industry is proved to be made of clay a long way above the feet, the financial press suffers from instant amnesia. Hutchings was for years a hero of the *Sunday Times* and *Telegraph*, who fed on a PR diet of orchestrated and shared scoops of Tomkins' latest feats. Even when the City turned against Hutchings because of the falling share price the symbiotic relationship of his PR flaks Hudson Sandler (now gone like their client) with the Sunday twins continued. His latest bid to silence the critics by selling off the lawnmower business was duly leaked three weeks ago.

Nowhere was this schizophrenia more apparent than at the *Sunday Times* where city editor John Jay was a long time fan. A week later it, with *Sunday Business*, exposed the abuse and within days Hutchings was gone. Despite Jay's disloyalty/pragmatism, Hutchings blubbed to both the *Times* and a more sympathetic Neil Bennett of the *Sunday Telegraph* that he had been too proprietorial, made mistakes and was sorry.

But perhaps Greg Hutchings' greatest epitaph as a man who paid himself almost £1.5m plus £1.25m in dividends on shares worth £75m but expected the company to pick up the tab for his family, his fun and his philanthropy was that he was cheap.

'Slicker'

Number crunching

2,000

number of points the NASDAQ, the index of US new technology stocks, has fallen so far this year

20,000

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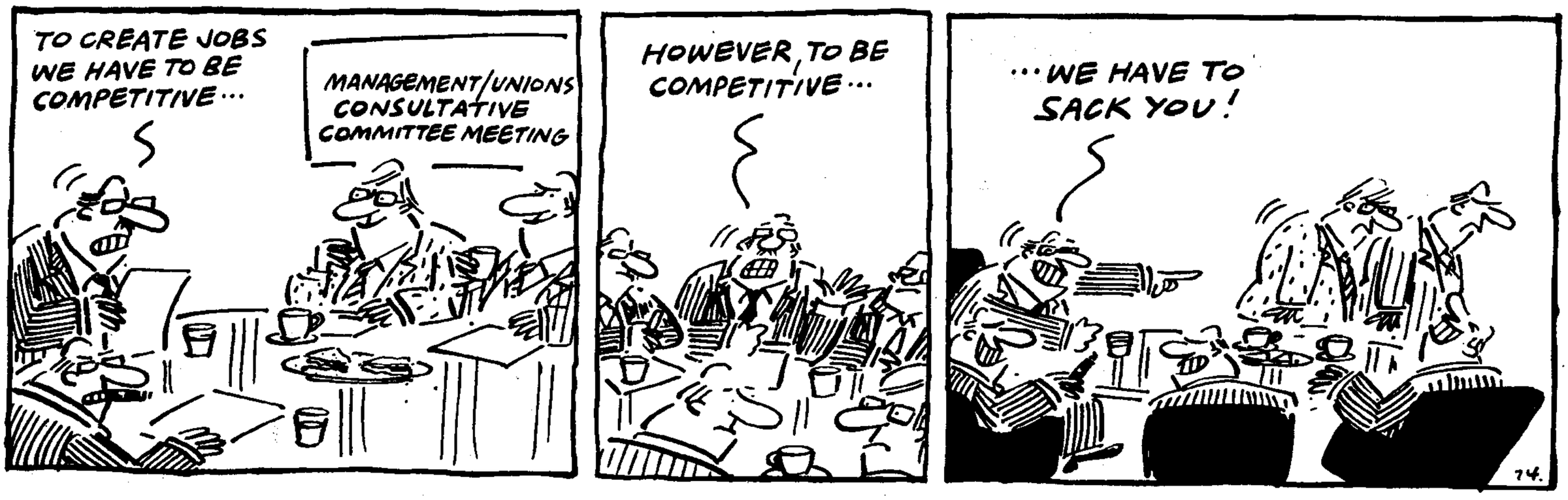
THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE/RIGG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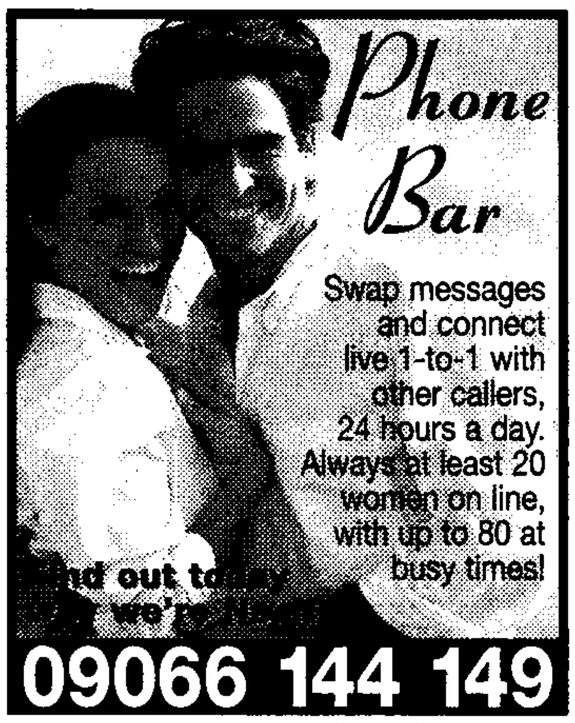
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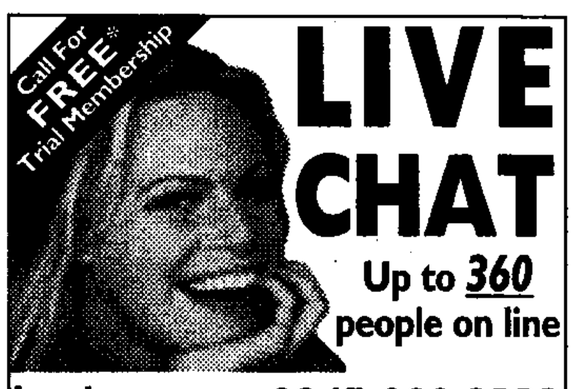
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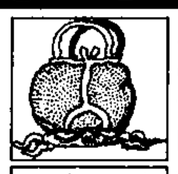

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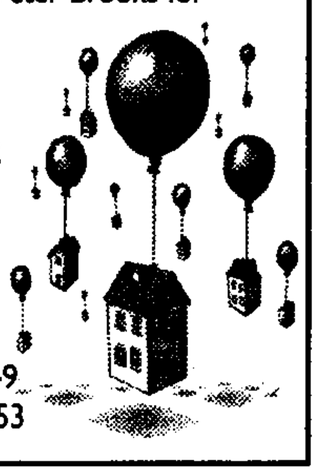

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EX-PAT MUSICIAN teacher returning U.K. 2001. Due to arthritis seeking new career. Any offers appreciated. Box 1913.

MALE, 31, INTELLIGENT, versatile, seeks work. UK/abroad. Anything considered. Keeping interested more important than money – jogger100@hotmail.com

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EYE LOVE

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LONDON-BASED PUBLISHER, 50, generous, impulsive, impatient, would like to meet intelligent younger woman who would enjoy sharing pleasures, having fun, taking time out, exchanging passions and foibles, and who likes a mix of the complex and the straightforward. Box 1413.

UNATTACHED MALE, forties, seeks honest, loyal, intelligent female with GSOH 34+ London area – accurra28@aol.com

BLONDE, ADVENTUROUS, sensual, caring FM grad. seeks fun-loving soul-mate with time to travel and explore the joys of life. No wimps need apply. West. Mids. Box 1813.

AUTUMN'S CLOSING IN. Unattached media male, 55 – often with daytime free – WLTM broadminded, neglected, middle-aged woman with upbeat personality and usual interests – for discreet mutually rewarding relationship. London/SE. Box 0413.

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TALL, ATTRACTIVE LADY, single – seeks elegant educated man under 55 years. Tel: 0207 403 8033.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE gentleman needs slim black girl with nice firm bottom. Ideal candidate will be well-educated and smartly dressed. Sense of humour essential. Photo please. Box 3013.

AMERICAN, 32, female, seeks established businessman – single only. Box 4301, Kailua-Kona, 96745, Hawaii, USA.

NICE GUY, attached, 35, seeks illicit liaisons. Discretion guaranteed – superchap2000@hotmail.com

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EXCEPTIONAL MAN, 40's, 6ft, professional, obedient, seeks exceptional strong-willed lady for exceptional relationship. Box 2113.

WITTY WOMAN, 30, non-smoker, fun, fit, untidy and not girly, seeks emotionally literate lively chappy to get to know, enjoy loud music, black humour, dancing, friends and the spice of life with. Game? No gits or basket cases, please. Box 2513.

PRETTY, PETITE, vivacious blonde, 28, seeks successful, confident, handsome man... Photo please! London. Box 1213.

PROFESSIONAL MALE (33) seeks Mrs. Robinson in early 40's – photo appreciated. Box 1113.

DAMSEL (30s brunette, solvent graduate) seeks knight (30-45) unattached, for long-term quelling of storm in D-cups. London/SE. Box 1013.

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ATTRACTIVE, MATURE lady, possibly attached but definitely oversexed and underplayed, sought by stylish professional widower, 60, for discreet, occasional, liaison. Lunch Pierre's, foreplay and fun, Mayfair flat. Box 1513.

TALL, CHARMING, hedonistic man who enjoys a challenge to complement 40ish woman with independence and own business. Box 0313.

WINTER'S DRAWING IN. 33 year old professional man seeks warm female company (25-35) for Autumn walks and Winter dinners. Bath area. Photo appreciated. Box 0213.

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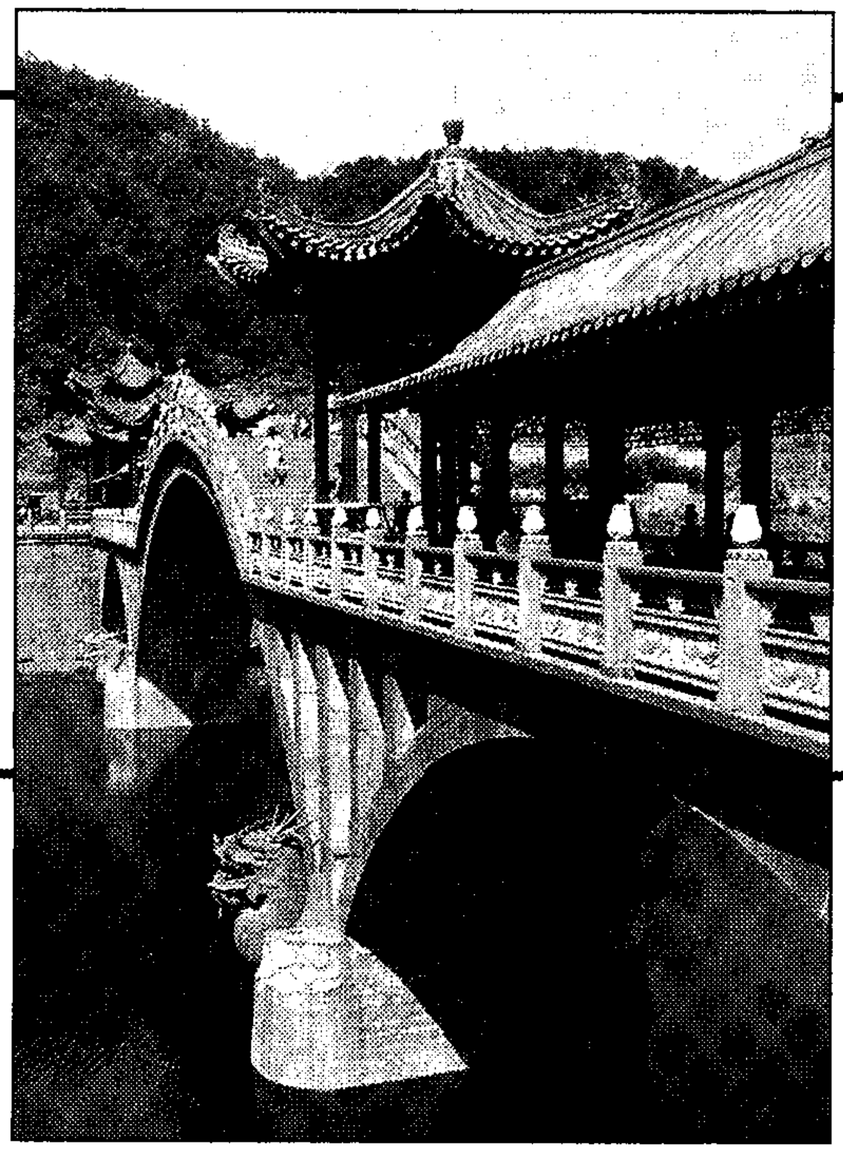

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